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1812

BY

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To My Father and Mother

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J. W. P.

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INTRODUCTION

THAT the United States went to war with Great Britain in 1812 at the insistence of western and southern men, and over the opposition of the Northeast, is a fact about which there has never been any doubt. There was a paradox here which apparently gave little concern to the older historians. If the real grievances which caused the war were interference by Great Britain with American commerce and the rights of American sailors, why was war to redress those grievances opposed by the maritime section of the nation and urged by the inland section, which they scarcely affected? The old answers, that New England was Anglophile, and that the West and South had developed a more aggressive and martial spirit, which felt the humiliation if not the pecuniary loss occasioned by the British measures, were in a measure true, but hardly sufficient. For some years past, historians have been turning to new explanations.

In this field, as in almost every other in American history, it is easy to see the profound influence of Professor F. J. Turner. Before the publication in 1893 of his essay, "The Significance of the Frontier in Ameri-

can History,"[1] the frontier had been regarded as little more than a picturesque phase in the national development. Since that event, the frontier—the "West"—has come to be recognizd as the source of many aspects of American character and the determining factor in many American policies.[2] It was natural, therefore, that students of the War of 1812 should come to view the West—particularly the Northwest—with more careful scrutiny. The result of such examination has been the placing of new emphasis upon the western demand for the annexation of Canada, which is seen to have arisen in large part from the conviction that the British were in league with the northwestern Indians and that only by destroying that alliance could the Northwest continue its career of expansion.[3]

The war found its sponsors, however, not only in the Northwest but along the whole frontier from New Hampshire round about to Georgia. For the states south of Kentucky, there was little to be gained by the conquest of Canada, and, since the divergence of interests between North and South was already evident, there was reason for southern states to fear the politi-

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[1] Conveniently reprinted with other essays in Turner, F. J., *The Frontier in American History,* New York, 1920.

[2] A recent illustration is seen in Adams, J. T., *Revolutionary New England* (1923), in which the growth of the revolutionary spirit from 1700 to 1775 is credited largely to the frontier influence.

[3] In addition to the works cited at close of chap. i, see Johnson, *Jefferson and His Colleagues,* chap x; Anderson, "The Insurgents of 1811," *A. H. A. Reports,* 1911, Vol. I, 165-176.

cal effect of a large addition to northern territory. Why, then, did the Southwest support the war? The answer to this question has been suggested,[4] but has never been worked out with anything approaching completeness. The examination made in the course of this study reveals an ardent expansionist sentiment already at work along the whole southern and southwestern border, varying in scope from the relatively modest proposal for the annexation of the Floridas to the more visionary idea of seizing all the Spanish possessions on the continent of North America. The link between the designs of the Southwest and those of the Northwest was the existence of the alliance between Great Britain and Spain. It was widely assumed that war with Great Britain would mean war with Spain, and that thus expansion at the north and at the south would proceed *pari passu*.

The purposes of the present study have been: to examine the development in the Northwest of the demand for the conquest and annexation of Canada; to trace the rise in the South and Southwest of the plan to annex the Floridas and possibly Mexico; to discover the relations of these two proposals to each other and to the question of war with Great Britain; to determine the position of the executive branch of the United States government (especially of Madison and his Secretary of State, Monroe) toward the plans for expansion,

[4] Adams, *United States*, VI, 123; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 77; Channing, *History of the United States*, IV, 456.

north and south; and finally, to determine the causes for the failure, all along the line, of the expansionist hopes with which the war began.

The principal conclusions arrived at may be summarized as follows:

I. The belief that the United States would one day annex Canada had a continuous existence from the early days of the War of Independence to the War of 1812. From 1783 to about 1810 such annexation was thought of only as a matter for an indefinite future, the nation during those years having neither the strength, nor any sufficient motive, for taking Canada by force. The rise of Tecumseh, backed, as was universally believed, by the British, produced an urgent demand in the Northwest that the British be expelled from Canada. This demand was a factor of primary importance in bringing on the war.

II. The South was almost unanimous in its demand for the Floridas, for agrarian, commercial, and strategic reasons, and in the spring of 1812 appeared to be in a fair way to accomplish its purpose. In the Southwest, at the same time, there was a lively interest in Mexico and a widely prevalent opinion that it was ready to fall into American hands.

III. Even within the Republican party, there was already a distinct sectional rift between North and South, and neither section was anxious to see the other increase its territory and population. But if both could gain at the same time, and in something like equal proportion, such objections would be obviated on both sides. There

is good evidence that, before the declaration of war, northern and southern Republicans came to a definite understanding that the acquisition of Canada on the north was to be balanced by the annexation of the Floridas on the south. Thus the war began with a double-barrelled scheme of territorial aggrandizement.

IV. Both Madison and Monroe, especially the latter as Secretary of State, were wholly in sympathy with the proposal for annexing Florida. The invasion of East Florida by General Mathews in March and April, 1812, was effected with the full knowledge of the administration. Special circumstances forced the government to repudiate Mathews, but the territory he had taken from the Spanish was held for over a year, until Congress had twice refused to sanction the occupation. At the same time, Monroe's official correspondence shows that he never really desired or expected the annexation of Canada.

V. It appears that in the all round failure of the expansionist plans, sectional feeling played a larger part than is commonly supposed. The sectional bargain with which the war had begun broke down. Opposition from northern Republicans combined with Federalists forced the abandonment of East Florida. On the other hand, it is evident that in the utter failure of the efforts to take Canada, not only want of skill and preparation, but also a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the administration and of certain southern men in Congress played a part.

VI. Finally, in the expansionist program with which

the war opened, we have the first general appearance of the idea which later received the name of "Manifest Destiny." Although enthusiasts like Jefferson had dreamed years before of a nation destined to embrace the continent, the date usually given for the dawn of "Manifest Destiny" is about 1830.[5] Yet both in the Congressional debates of 1812 and in the contemporary press, particularly that of the Southwest, we find the idea repeatedly expressed. "Where is it written in the book of fate," asked the editor of the Nashville *Clarion* (April 28, 1812), "that the American republic shall not stretch her limits from the Capes of the Chesapeake to Nootka sound, from the isthmus of Panama to Hudson bay?"

Two explanations are due, with respect to the scope and proportions of this study. First, it makes no effort to give a full account of the causes of the War of 1812, but deals with one set of causes only. The exclusion from all but briefest mention of the maritime grievances against Great Britain is with no wish to belittle them. Without them, it is safe to say, there would have been no war, just as the writer feels safe in saying that without the peculiar grievances and ambitions of the West there would have been no war. One set of causes was perhaps as essential as the other.

Second, the writer has thought best to give some account of those military operations during the war

[5] Adams, E. D. *The Power of Ideals in American History*, chap. iii.

which bore a direct relation to the plans for territorial expansion. The campaigns of 1812 and 1813 on the Canadian border are given in the barest outline, while the operations in East Florida, though on a smaller scale, receive a more detailed treatment. For this apparent lack of proportion the justification is that the details of the northern campaigns are well known and can be read in a dozen careful accounts, whereas no full account of the East Florida operations has ever been published.

EXPANSIONISTS OF 1812

CHAPTER I

The Northwest and Canada

To the leaders of the American Revolution it seemed a matter of first importance to bring about the union of Canada with the revolting colonies. The history of that war presents no more brilliant or audacious campaign than Montgomery's drive down the Richelieu and St. Lawrence rivers and Arnold's expedition through the wilderness of Maine. The *Journals* of the Continental Congress abound in references to measures for the prosecution of the campaign. The cause fell with Montgomery under the walls of Quebec, but did not pass from the minds of statesmen. In September, 1776, when the American army was in full retreat from Canada, Franklin framed a set of tentative terms of peace, among them the following: "To prevent those occasions of misunderstanding, which are apt to arise when the territories of different powers border on each other, through the bad conduct of frontier inhabitants on both sides, Britain shall cede to the United States the provinces or colonies of Quebec, St. John's, Nova Scotia, Bermuda, East and West Florida, and the Bahama Islands, with all their adjoining and

intermediate territories now claimed by her." In return the United States were to pay a sum of money, grant free trade to all British subjects, and guarantee British possession of the West India Islands. "It is worth our while," wrote Franklin, "to offer such a sum for the colonies to be ceded. . . It is absolutely necessary for us to have them for our own security."[1] Washington stated more explicitly the objection to leaving Canada in British hands. "If that country," he wrote from Valley Forge in May, 1778, "is not with us, it will, from its proximity to the Eastern States, its intercourse and connection with the numerous tribes of western Indians, its communion with them by water and other local advantages, be at least a troublesome if not a dangerous neighbor to us; and ought, at all events, to be in the same interests and politics, of the other States."[2]

With the signing of the peace treaty with Great Britain in 1783, the acquisition of Canada ceased to be a practical issue. It still indeed lingered in men's minds. John Adams, on his mission to England in 1785, found Mr. Pitt's opponents expressing the opinion that Canada and Nova Scotia must soon pass to the United States; "there must be a war for it; they know how it will end, but the sooner the better; this done, we shall be at peace; till then, never."[3] Gouverneur Morris, himself no expansionist, wrote in 1803 that at the time of the

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[1] *Writings of Benjamin Franklin,* VI, 352-4. [2] *Writings of George Washington,* VII, 38. [3] *Works of John Adams,* VIII, 333.

Constitutional Convention he knew "that all North America must at length be annexed to us—happy, indeed, if the lust of dominion stop there."[4] But the nation would for twenty years be too weak to think seriously of taking Canada forcibly from the British, however desirable such a measure might be.

That it would in fact be most desirable was soon apparent, and for reasons precisely in line with those which had been laid down by Washington. The relations between the British and Indians became a standing grievance to the United States, and for thirteen years after the treaty of peace the grievance was aggravated by the British retention of the border posts, which were to have been surrendered upon the consummation of peace. The British excused their delinquency upon the ground that the United States had not carried out faithfully its side of the treaty; but it has been convincingly shown that a deeper reason was their desire to retain their influence over the Indians of the Northwest as well as the valuable fur trade of the same region.[5] The British policy was to keep the northwestern tribes united, in order that they might more effectually resist Yankee encroachments upon their lands, and so keep intact a sort of Indian buffer state between the United States and Canada, the fur trade of which would remain in British hands.[6]

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[4] *Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris,* II, 442.

[5] McLaughlin, "The Western Posts and the British Debts," *A. H. A. Report,* 1894, pp. 413-444.

[6] Ibid., pp. 433-435. Bemis, *Jay's Treaty,* chaps. i. and vi.

But the British—or at least the Canadian officers and agents—went further still. During 1793 and 1794, when war between the two nations seemed likely, the Canadian authorities gave distinct encouragement to the Indian tribes then at war with the United States; and Wayne, after his victory at Fallen Timbers, in August, 1794, found certain evidence not only that the Indians had fought with British arms, but that some of the Canadian militia had joined them in the action.[7] In fact, it was stated a few years later in a letter from an unnamed Canadian writer, which was sent with the approval of General Hunter to the British commander-in-chief in North America, that if Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe could have had his way, "he would have given effective aid to the Indians & the American army would have been cut to pieces," and thus the Americans would have been held back from the British frontiers.[8]

The Americans were of course not unaware of the relations existing between the British and the savage tribes, and numerous speakers in Congress laid the blame for Indian troubles squarely at Britain's door. St. Clair's defeat occurred on November 4, 1791. In the following January a speaker in the House of Representatives declared: "As long as Britain is suffered to retain these posts, we can never hope to succeed against the Indians; nor ought we to trace our late misfortunes to any other source than her still holding them

[7] McLaughlin, *op. cit.*, p. 441. Bemis, *Jay's Treaty*, p. 178.
[8] *Michigan Pioneer and Hist. Coll.*, XV, 10, 11.

in her possession."[9] The debates in the House in 1794 over the British restrictions upon American commerce gave occasion for many denunciations of British intrigue among the savages.[10] The recovery of the northwestern posts from the British was the remedy proposed at that time; but Findley of Pennsylvania stated years afterward that during this Indian war "it was the opinion of our most sage politicians that we never could be secure against Indian war till we had possession of Canada, and by that means have it in our power to cut off the communication between foreign nations and the Indians on our frontiers and in our own territory." But he added that the same men "said that neither our revenue, our credit or population would at that time justify the attempt."[11] Indeed, Mr. Giles of Virginia, in March, 1794, declared that "if there should be a war between the United States and Great Britain, it will be a war of property. . . . It is known that the United States cannot make an attack upon Great Britain, and territory and conquest with them are no objects."[12] So far as the debates show, the conquest of Canada did not at this time enter into the American calculations.

The Indian menace attendant upon British retention

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[9] *Annals of Congress*, 2 Cong., p. 338.

[10] "The American is convinced," said Hartley of Pennsylvania, "that she [Britain] has supported the Indians in their war against us. Ammunition and arms they certainly obtained from British agents or factors." Ibid. 3 Cong., p. 291. Findley of Pennsylvania used similar language. Ibid. p. 326. See also ibid., pp. 246, 318, 414, 513, etc.

[11] Ibid. 12 Cong., I, 500, 501 (Dec. 13, 1811).

[12] Ibid. 3 Cong., p. 548.

of the posts was an effective argument for the execution of the Jay treaty, the terms of which provided for their surrender. While the fate of the treaty hung in the balance, the West showed abundant signs of uneasiness and apprehension. The Pittsburgh *Gazette* reported a suspicious gathering of the Six Nations at Buffalo Creek under British auspices and printed a letter from Cincinnati which described the attitude of the western Indians as increasingly menacing and declared they had assurance from the British that "their old father is not going to give them up yet." An Indian rising, this letter prophesied, was to be expected in May or June, 1796. After adding similar suspicious signs, the *Gazette* commented as follows:

"These particulars show sufficiently what we are to expect if the appropriations are not made, the Treaty carried into effect, and the Posts surrendered. . . . This country is in a state of general alarm; we hear that the Clergy are convening their congregations to come forward with their voice as one man to petition the House of Representatives. We are surprised at the obstinacy of our immediate representatives, Gallatin and Findley."[18]

Meanwhile, in the House of Representatives, Hillhouse of Connecticut was calling attention to the same subject. "If this Treaty is rejected," he asked, "what is to become of the Western posts? . . . It had been represented, ever since he had been in Congress, by the

[18] Pittsburgh *Gazette*, Sept. 5, 1795; May 14, 1796.

gentlemen who now oppose the Treaty, and seem to feel such a strange apathy on the subject, as a most important object; that to obtain the Western posts almost any sacrifice ought to be made; that without them we could not expect permanent peace with the Indians, or security to our frontier inhabitants, or the benefits of the Indian trade. And now that they are almost within our grasp, if we let them go, will not the people of the United States call us to a very severe account?"[14]

Considerable credit for the favorable action on the treaty is no doubt due to the pressure exerted by the people of the western country in favor of a measure which would materially lessen the Indian menace. A letter from Philadelphia referring to the petitions in favor of the treaty from the Pittsburgh district stated that "the grand juries, the presidents of your courts and associate judges, and all the bar had signed them, and unequivocally asserted these treaties to have received the 'sanction of the American constitution.' "[15]

The northwestern posts were handed over to the United States according to stipulation, in the summer of 1796, and although the British did not wholly alter their Indian policy, comparative quiet reigned for a decade along the international border. The Jay treaty and the trouble with France tended to smooth relations with England, and the short European peace following the Treaty of Amiens relieved the tension arising from

[14] *Annals of Congress*, 4 Cong. 1 sess., p. 1089.
[15] Pittsburgh *Gazette*, May 28, 1796.

the British maritime policy. The Canadian writer already quoted upon Simcoe's policy did indeed affect to see sinister designs against the British provinces. Some trifling readjustments of American frontier garrisons he looked upon as hostile in intent, and he feared "the loss of the fur trade & of the Canadas . . . if strong measures be not adopted and in due time."[16] But his fears were fantastic—at least so far as they concerned the time when he wrote.

The renewal of the European war, with the inauguration of Great Britain's more stringent interferences with neutral commerce and her continued practice of impressing American seamen, closed this short period of semi-friendly relations, and the atmosphere along the border bore witness to the renewed tension. "There was a feeling of uneasiness in Detroit as early as 1806."[17] But it was not until the next year, when war sentiment flared up over the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair (June 22, 1807), that the attitude of the northwestern Indians became menacing. Jefferson's opening message to the Tenth Congress touched upon the subject. "Among our Indian neighbors in the Northwestern quarter," he wrote, "some fermentation was observed after the late occurrences, threatening the continuance of our peace." Measures had been taken against the danger, however, and it appeared that "the tribes in our vicinity . . . are sincerely disposed to ad-

[16] *Mich. Pioneer & Hist. Coll.*, XV, 10, 11. Date 1800.
[17] McLaughlin, *Lewis Cass*, p. 57.

here to their friendship with us, and to their peace with all others."[18]

Jefferson's optimism would appear not altogether warranted. He was in possession, no doubt, of a letter written by Governor Harrison from Vincennes, Indiana, September 5, to the Secretary of War. Harrison believed that "the Chippeways, Ottawas, and part of the Pottawatomies only wait for the signal from the British Indian Agents to commence the attack. . . . The British could not have adopted a better plan to effect their purpose of alienating from our Government, the affections of the Indians than by employing this vile Instrument [the Prophet]. It manifests at once their inveterate rancour against us and their perfect acquaintance with the Indian character."[19] In November Governor Hull of Michigan wrote to the Secretary of War of a recent conference at Malden between the British and a number of Indians, in which the British officers had declared that war with the United States was imminent, and that if war came the Indians must take up arms in behalf of the British. Hull was doing what he could to counteract the British seductions, treating the Indians kindly and issuing large quantities of rations on the principle that "we had better feed them than fight them."[20]

Alarm for the safety of the frontier was quick to show itself in Congress. Mumford of New York, in

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[18] Oct. 27, 1807. *Annals of Congress*, 10 Cong. 1 sess., I, 16.
[19] *Burton Hist. Coll. Pamphlets*, No. 4, pp. 140-141.
[20] *Am. State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I, 746.

the House, mentioned the dangers existing—"the whole of their [the British] naval force on the Lakes prepared for war; numerous tribes of savages assembled at their instigation in the neighborhood of Detroit."[21] Findley (western Pennsylvania) thought the situation dangerous not only in the new states and territories, but in Pennsylvania and others of the older states.[22] Southard (New Jersey) was sure that the British were not only re-enforcing their regular garrisons, but that "emissaries from them have gone among the savage tribes to influence them to be ready to sacrifice the defenceless people."[23]

But the most interesting expressions of concern for the safety of the frontier came naturally from representatives of the new western states. Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, later a leading advocate of war and annexation, appeared now for the first time in Congress —a young man of twenty-six. His constituents, said Johnson, speaking on the bill for fortifications and gunboats, were ready to contribute to naval defence. But in their turn, in case of war, "they would call upon Congress, through their Representatives, for the means of protecting their Western frontiers from the inroads of savage hostility. A large frontier will be exposed to savage incursions. English influence will excite the savages to hostility. They had even now before their eyes monuments of British influence and savage feroc-

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[21] *Annals of Congress,* 10 Cong. 1 sess., I, 985. [22] Ibid., II, 1521, 1522.
[23] Ibid., II, 1987.

ity; they had at this time before their eyes widows and orphans, who had lost their dearest companions by this influence and hostility."[24] A later speech of Johnson's in the same session is notable for its attention to two other subjects very close to the Westerner's heart—the fur trade, ever closely related to the Indian question, and the exposed position of New Orleans, involving the free egress from the Mississippi and its tributaries. "If the British or any other nation," he said, "can excite the hostility of the Indians by furnishing them liberally with supplies, they will also engross the whole peltry trade. Not only so, but the influence of traders with the natives is almost incredible; and at any time those who trade with them think proper, our Western territory is open to devastation and ruin.[25] The Indians

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[24] Ibid., I, 1155.

[25] An anonymous pamphlet published in London in 1811—obviously propaganda for the Northwest Company of Canada—asserted that that company kept under British influence sixty thousand Indians, including twelve thousand warriors whose "fitness for military purposes [was] the greatest of that of any Indians which could now be brought by the British into the field." The author added that in these Indians the British possessed a weapon "of which, more than any other of our means of annoyance, the whole mass of the population of the United States is afraid.... At this day the rumors which make the most serious impression upon the public mind in the United States, and which are consequently copied from newspaper to newspaper with the greatest eagerness, are those of *preparations on the part of the Indians,* under the influence of Great Britain, to commence hostilities. As supposed promoters of such preparations, the North West Company and its servants are, at the same time, constantly held up to the odium of the people of the United States." *On the Origin and Progress of the North-West Company of Canada, with*

will rush in upon Indiana and Orleans also. . . . Is not the preservation of Orleans important in a political as well as commercial view?"[26] Campbell of Tennessee expressed a similar opinion in regard to British-Indian relations,[27] and it was notable that western congressmen supported a proposal for arming the entire body of the militia, and war measures generally.[28]

That Congress, and particularly its western members, were convinced, in the session of 1807-1808, that the British were bidding for Indian support and that their influence was a grave menace to the frontier, is beyond dispute. But that they thought of the conquest of Canada as a practicable remedy for the evil, there seems to be no evidence. It was a noteworthy fact that the two men who advanced the idea did so in opposing the moderate measures of defence desired by the administration.[29] The men who were in a few years to

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a History of the Fur Trade, etc., pp. 15-21. See also Van der Zee, "Fur Trade Operations in the Eastern Iowa Country from 1800 to 1833," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics,* XII, 479-567, especially p. 500.

[26] *Annals of Congress,* 10 Cong. 1 sess., II, 1625. Howard, a colleague of Johnson's, also touched upon the danger to New Orleans. Ibid., pp. 1915, 1916.

[27] Ibid., II, 2017. [28] Speeches of Rhea (Tenn.) and Lyon (Ky.). Ibid., I, 1030, 1036.

[29] John Randolph, now an opponent of the administration, stated his opinion in November, 1807, of the course which should have been followed. "He thought Congress ought to have been immediately convened on the capture of the Chesapeake. and our minister at London instantly recalled, after having made an explicit and peremptory demand for redress.... Congress being convened, the nation should have been put into a posture of defence, waiting a reasonable time to re-

become leaders of the movement for conquest and annexation talked now only of defensive war.

If we turn from Congress to expressions of public opinion in the part of the country most affected by border troubles, we find not only no evidence of any articulate desire to conquer Canada, but an appearance of less concern about the Indian menace and less con-

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ceive redress by an envoy. That being refused, instant retaliation should have been taken on the offending party. Mr. R. would have invaded Canada and Nova Scotia, not with a view to their incorporation into our system of government, but as pledges to be retained against a future pacification, until we had obtained ample redress for our wrongs." Ibid., I, 849.

Randolph later said this had been the language of more than one (ibid., II, 2035), but the only other professed advocate of the policy whom I have discovered was Stanford of North Carolina, who from this time on was consistently opposed to the administration and the war party. Speaking in opposition to a proposed increase in the army, Stanford complained that Congress was called upon to vote without knowing the purpose of the proposed measures. He doubted if we were to have war. "We don't know that all negotiation is at an end; but, if so, let gentlemen come out and bottom their measures upon determined war.... If it be determined, and it becomes an object to invade the Canadas, we have nothing to conceal in that event. If we say so, I have no doubt we can do it with success. It cannot be doubted if policy, interest or just reparation for outrages lately committed suggest it, we can both say it and do it—exclude the proud name of British America from the continent at least." Ibid., II, 1951. These were brave words, but in the light of the speaker's subsequent record, we can not take them as sincerely meant. A more outspoken opponent of war, Gardenier, a New York Federalist, also touched upon the subject, but only to remark that "We can derive no benefit even from a successful war. We may take Canada indeed, and perhaps Nova Scotia, but we are better without them." Ibid., I, 1190.

viction of British intrigue with the Indians, than had been displayed in Congress. This is true, at least, if the Democratic press of Kentucky is representative of opinion in the western country.

There had been no lack of warlike talk. The *Chesapeake* outrage was keenly felt, and warlike resolutions were adopted in one Kentucky town after another and duly reported in the press,[30] but not one of these mentions British influence among the Indians as a grievance. The Frankfort *Palladium* for September 10, 1807, published a report from Ohio that the neighboring Indians were being subjected to pressure from those to the north to join them against the United States; but any fears awakened by this report were no doubt quieted by a message from Governor Harrison to the effect that "there does not at present exist the smallest probability of an Indian war," and that the Indians were "determined to preserve their relations of peace and amity with the United States, even if a war between us and Great Britain should take place." Corroborative information was at the same time received from General Wells on the Maumee in Ohio.[31] In his December message to the Kentucky Legislature, Governor Greenup assured that body that "the alarms which were excited by the unusual assemblage of several Indian tribes have subsided, and no symptom of an interruption is at present apprehended from that quarter."[32]

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[30] See especially Frankfort *Palladium,* Aug. 13, Aug. 20, 1807.
[31] Ibid. Oct. 22, 1807. [32] Ibid. Dec. 31, 1807.

In the next paragraph of his message the governor spoke of the difficulties with Great Britain and asked "whether it may not be prudent at this time to make a public expression of the sentiments of the citizens of this state, and to adopt the most efficient measures in our power to co-operate with and carry into prompt effect whatever may be required of us by the government of the union." The legislature in response asserted its readiness "to pledge our honor, our blood and treasure in support of such measures as may be adopted by the general government, to secure and protect the peace, dignity, and independence of the union against foreign invasion, and to chastise and bring to a state of reason our haughty and imperious foes."[33] Here certainly was no language of caution or of diplomacy, and if British activity among the Indians rankled in Kentucky breasts, we might expect to find here a frank and free statement of such grievances. But the governor's message in no way coupled the British with the Indian disturbances and made no mention of Canada; and the legislature, in listing the offenses of "our haughty and imperious foes," mentioned only the violations of American rights on the high seas.

It would be strange indeed if no mention of a connection between the Indians and the British were found in Kentucky papers while Kentucky congressmen were talking as quoted above. We find such references from

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[33] Ibid. Jan. 21. 1808.

time to time during 1808,[34] but little fear of a general Indian war could have existed when Fourth of July banqueters drank to the toast: "Our Indian neighbors—we have buried the Tomahawk, we have smoked the Calumet, our mutual wounds are healed, the chain of friendship is bright; may we henceforth be as brethren of one great family."[35]

In December, 1808, the Kentucky Legislature again assembled. The governor's address denounced the conduct of France and England and urged the provision of

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[34] The *Palladium* of Jan. 28, 1808, reprinted from the *National Intelligencer* an interview with a person just come from Detroit. "He states that the prevailing opinion in the British settlements in the neighborhood is that there will be a war between this country and Great Britain. In corroboration of this opinion he states that there are now at Fort Amherstburg, a British post about eighteen miles from Detroit, at least 2,000 Indians, almost exclusively warriors. That they are all armed, and supported at the expense of the British, and with great liberality.... In case of war, it is expected that, under the auspices of the British, a general massacre will take place, for which they are held in readiness." A letter from Detroit, dated Nov. 30, 1807, published in the *Palladium* of Feb. 11, 1808, mentioned the conclusion of a land treaty with the Indians, and commented: "The influence of the British, the Prophet and the persons settled on the land under Indian purchase, all combined against us.... Every effort of the British has been exerted to render the Indians hostile to us; but thank God, I trust and believe we have counteracted successfully, their infamous designs." The *Palladium* of June 23, 1808, reported symptoms of Indian hostility up the Mississippi, the murder of some settlers or traders, and a state of general alarm on the frontier.

[35] *Palladium*, July 7, 1808. Apparently the dinner was at Frankfort.

arms for the militia.[36] The legislature thereupon adopted resolutions assuring the Federal government of its support, "whether war, a total nonintercourse, or a more rigid execution of the embargo system be determined on."[37] But neither governor nor legislature made any reference to British-Indian relations or to Canada. Meanwhile the governor had been called upon by the Secretary of War to have "5005 of the militia immediately organized, well armed and equipped, and ready to march at a moment's warning." "Whether this requisition," commented the *Palladium*, "is made in consequence of the expedition fitting out at Halifax, and supposed by some to be intended for New Orleans, or from the unfriendly aspect of the dispatch lately received from England by the schooner Hope—or merely to be in readiness to act as Congress may direct, cannot at present be ascertained."[38] Plainly the conquest of Canada was at this time far from the public mind.[39]

By the time of the meeting of the Tenth Congress for its second session in November, 1808, there are indications that the country was taking a somewhat more aggressive tone—was perhaps, in some quarters, coming to think of the conquest of Canada as a feasible remedy for the troubles with Great Britain. It was on November 27, 1808, that John Howe, sent on a tour

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[36] Ibid. Dec. 15, 1808. [37] Ibid. Dec. 22, 1808.
[38] Ibid. Nov. 17, 1808.
[39] Down to April 20, 1809, when the file of the *Palladium* ends, I found nothing but the above on British-Indian intrigues or the expulsion of the British from Canada.

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of observation into the States by Sir George Prevost, made a report to his chief from Washington. He had found the opinion prevalent that, should the non-intercourse system then proposed go into effect, and should it fail to produce a change in the conduct of the European belligerents, war with one or both of them must follow. As to which it should be, if the nation chose to go to war with one only, he found this line of reasoning "given by every man with whom you converse here. They frankly say that we [that is, the United States] cannot if disposed, injure France. Her territory is out of our reach, and she has no Commerce on the Ocean. But they say, we can take the British Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. . . . It is amusing to hear them talk here of the extreme facility with which they can possess themselves of the British Provinces. No Man of either Party seems to imagine there would be any difficulty in effecting the Object."[40]

R. M. Johnson had not yet come to the point of openly advocating the conquest of Canada, though he was outspoken enough on the subject of the Westerner's grievances against the British—their refusal of permission to navigate the St. Lawrence, their monopoly of the fur trade, and their influence over the Indians within the American boundaries.[41] It was not a western man, but Burwell of Virginia, who definitely announced the expulsion of the British from Canada as an end to be sought.

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[40] *American Historical Review,* XVII, 70 ff.
[41] *Annals of Congress,* 10 Cong. 2 sess., p. 584.

"It is well known too," said Burwell, "that the possession of that Government gives her [Great Britain] an opportunity to operate against you, to excite not only the Indians out of our limits to direct warfare if necessary, but by merchandise and intrigue, to excite them within our own country. And though I would not risk the peace of the country to free us from evils of that kind, yet if we were forced into war, by more irresistible causes, I should certainly consider this collateral advantage gained by it important. Have we not already seen the peace and internal tranquillity of the country disturbed by their influence among the Indians? . . . The expulsion of the British from Canada has always been deemed an object of first importance to the peace of the United States, and their security against the inroads of an enemy; however for party purposes its importance may now be depreciated."[42] If the Tenth Congress could talk like this in its expiring moments, its successors might very well come to the point of action.

While these occurrences were taking place in the United States, letters which were passing between British officials and servants in Canada showed an intention little different from what was suspected in America—an intention, that is, to retain the friendship of the Indians and make use of them in case of war; though the same letters betrayed an apprehension that the meas-

[42] Ibid., p. 1283. Feb. 1, 1809.

ures used to that end might not prove effective.[43] That the plan of using the Indians as allies against the United States had the support of the British government is shown by a letter from Castlereagh to Sir James Craig, dated at Downing Street, April 8, 1809.

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[43] Mr. Claus, Indian agent at Amherstburg, wrote in April, 1808, to Lieutenant-Governor Gore at York: "I trust the confidence your Excellency has been pleased to place in me is not thrown away [;] nothing whatever on my part shall be wanting to establish as strongly as possible His Majestys Indian Interests with all the Nations in this Country & of obtaining what assistance (if necessary) that [sic] can be had.

"You have Sir, called upon me for my opinion 'as to the prospect of obtaining their assistance if required' [;] from the best information I can collect the number of fighting men on the waters of the Miamis, East borders of Lake Michigan, Sagana and the interior of the Country between those waters do not exceed fifteen hundred & I am very confident from the present defenceless condition of this Post, without the expectation of anything to back them, that we will find them *very* backward [;] was there an adequate force at this place I think that a sufficient number might be brought in to keep our ground until the back Indians would be brought forward." *Mich. Pioneer & Hist. Coll.*, XV, 47, 48.

Two weeks later the same agent told Mr. Selby, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at York, that "Mr. Fisher.... brings nothing new with him but what I have mentioned on a former occasion—the Language of the American Govt. to the Indians, to sit quiet in case of hostilities. There is little doubt in my mind of the weight it has with them, owing to the very weak state of this country, it makes them extremely cautious." Ibid., p. 49.

In the following February Lieutenant-Governor Gore wrote in his turn to Sir James Craig, Governor-General of Canada: "My information from those who are well acquainted with the disposition of the Indians, leads me to believe that we cannot rely on their Cooperation unless a very considerable additional Regular Force, be sent to that part of the Country. Captain Elliott, the superintendent, is convinced that with one Regular Regiment, the American Post of Detroit, and the Country

"Under an undefined relation with the United States of America," wrote the British War Minister, "I certainly concur in your position, that attention must be kept up to conciliate the Indian Tribes upon the following Principle: that if in a contest they are not employed to act with us, they will be engaged to act against us,[44] & that we are to consider not so much their use as allies as their Destructiveness if Enemies.

"I shall therefore be ready to support the temporary arrangements you may find it necessary to make in this view.

"Should an amicable adjustment take Place with the American States, it is possible that some joint system as to the treatment of the Indian Nations may be agreed upon, which would form the Basis of a permanent Arrangement with them."[45]

Castlereagh's policy was opportunist, not diabolical, but none the less unpleasant for the frontiersmen of the United States, when any month might bring war.

The tendency of the policy is reflected, perhaps not altogether accurately, in a letter from Governor Harrison, at Vincennes, to Secretary of War Eustis, July 5, 1809: "The Shawanee prophet and about 40 followers

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between it, and the Ohio wou'd soon be in our possession—and the Indians become our active friends, numbers of whom would then be at liberty to give their Aid in any other part that may be threatened." Ibid., p. 53.

[44] See Claus's second letter to Selby, note 43 above. There is plenty of additional evidence that the policy of the United States was to keep the Indians neutral.

[45] *Mich. Pioneer & Hist. Coll.*, XXIII, 69.

arrived here about a week ago. . . . I must confess that my suspicions of his guilt have been rather strengthened than diminished at every interview I have had with him since his arrival. He acknowledges that he received an invitation to war against us, from the British, last fall, and that he was apprised of the intentions of the Sacks, Foxes, &c. early in the spring, and warmly solicited to join their league. . . . The result of all my enquiries on the subject, is, that the late combination was produced by British intrigue and influence, in anticipation of war between them and the United States."[46]

The Eleventh Congress, which assembled toward the end of 1809, seemed at first oblivious of the frontier question. December 18, there was laid before the House a Senate resolution expressing approbation of the conduct of the Executive in refusing to hold further communication with Mr. Jackson, the British minister.[47] The resolution was warmly debated till January 3, when it was passed by a party vote.[48] Here was an opportunity to air all the grievances against the British; yet there was no mention of their plotting with the Indians, although among the speakers were Johnson and McKee of Kentucky and Rhea of Tennessee, all of them among the "war hawks" of the next Congress. Johnson presented a list of the official grievances against Great Britain,[49] and Rhea enumerated the Brit-

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[46] Dawson, *William H. Harrison*, p. 130.
[47] *Annals of Congress*, 11 Cong., I, 747.
[48] Ibid., p. 1151. [49] Ibid., p. 796.

ish "aggressions,"[50] but neither had anything to say about Indian affairs. Emott, a New York Federalist, could even taunt the western members with being brave because they were out of danger—"the enemy, before it can reach them, must pass over their neighbors, and thus afford them time to prepare for the conflict."[51] The Westerners made no reply; doubtless they thought the taunt beneath their notice. Yet the fact that it could be made would indicate that the danger of Indian attacks inspired by the British was not at that moment prominent in Washington thought or conversation.

But this session of Congress was not to run to an end without striking a new note of belligerency, and its members were soon expressing themselves unequivocally for the expulsion of Great Britain from the continent. In January, 1810, Senator Giles of Virginia introduced a bill for putting the navy in war trim,[52] and on January 23 he supported it in a speech. He thought "a war purely defensive alone justifiable, yet he thought it perfectly correct to carry on such a war, when undertaken, offensively; and that it was perfectly justifiable to seize a territory, and appropriate it as a just retribution for the evils of war unjustly inflicted by a culpable assailant."[53] Mr. Giles's biographer believes that the War of 1812, "if Giles had had his way, would have been the war of 1810."[54]

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[50] Ibid., p. 1022.
[51] Ibid., p. 826. [52] Ibid., p. 526. [53] Ibid., p. 539.
[54] Anderson, *William Branch Giles*, p. 155.

Giles was followed a month later by Clay, then serving out an unexpired term in the Senate, in a speech which has been often quoted.

"No man in the nation wants peace more than I," Clay declared; "but I prefer the troubled ocean of war, demanded by the honor and independence of this country, with all its calamities and desolation, to the tranquil and putrescent pool of ignominious peace. If we can accommodate our differences with one of the belligerents only, I should prefer that one to be Britain; but if with neither, and we are forced into a selection of our enemy, then am I for war with Britain, because I believe her prior in aggression, and her injuries and insults to us more atrocious in character. . . . It is said, however, that no object is attainable by war with Great Britain. In its fortunes, we are to estimate not only the benefit to be derived to ourselves, but the injury to be done the enemy. The conquest of Canada is in your power. I trust I shall not be deemed presumptuous when I state that I verily believe that the militia of Kentucky are alone competent to place Montreal and Upper Canada at your feet. Is it nothing to the British nation; is it nothing to the pride of her Monarch, to have the last of the immense North American possessions held by him in the commencement of his reign wrested from his dominion? Is it nothing to us to extinguish the torch that lights up savage warfare? Is it nothing to acquire the entire fur trade connected with that coun-

try, and to destroy the temptation and opportunity of violating your revenue and other laws?"[55]

Johnson, in the House, spoke in April in similar tone: "Why have not the people complained of the increase of the army and navy under the last years of Mr. Jefferson's administration? Because they believed one should have been sent to the Canadas, and the other to drive smuggling vessels from our waters; and the only complaint made is, that we have failed to use the physical force of the nation to chastise the aggressions of other nations." Johnson made plain his desire "to maintain our rights, maritime and territorial . . . and drive our enemies from North America."[56]

Johnson spoke of driving the British from the continent as one of three possible courses to be pursued. He had not yet touched the joyous note of Manifest Destiny. That honor was reserved for Clay. In the final session of the Eleventh Congress, in the debate on the West Florida bill, Clay declared: "I am not, sir, in favor of cherishing the passion of conquest. But I must be permitted to conclude by declaring my hope to see, ere long, the *new* United States (if you will allow me the expression) embracing not only the old thirteen States, but the entire country east of the Mississippi, including East Florida, and some of the territories to the north of us also."[57]

The Eleventh Congress had improved upon its im-

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[55] *Annals of Congress,* 11 Cong., I, 579, 580.
[56] Ibid., II, 1867, 1871. [57] Ibid., 3 sess., p. 63.

mediate predecessor in boldness of talk if in nothing else, and the change was most noticeable in the Westerners. They had taken, as we have seen, a strong expansionist tone. The conception of war had advanced in two years from defensive to offensive. The change was doubtless due to various causes—perhaps most of all to sheer exasperation at the long continued dilatory fashion of handling the nation's foreign affairs. But in the West there was another circumstance which must have had a very pronounced effect in altering the attitude of the people toward the British in Canada. We have seen that in the years 1807, 1808, and 1809, the people of Kentucky showed little concern over the reports and rumors of the work of British agents among the Indians. But by 1810 the West was becoming aware of a new and really serious Indian menace. "By April, 1810," says Eggleston, "there was a general conviction on the part of the whites that the plans of Tecumseh and the Prophet were really hostile to the United States."[58] Furthermore, it was known or strongly suspected that the British were lending sympathy and support to these Indian leaders, who sought to make their resistance to land sales "a dam in the progress of the great waters of the white advance."[59] A new series of reports from territorial governors and others, in the summer and fall of 1810, told of British

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[58] Eggleston, *Tecumseh and the Shawnee Prophet,* p. 162.
[59] Anderson, "The Insurgents of 1811." *A. H. A. Report,* 1911, p. 171.

influence at work among the Indians, and the western press reflected similar views.[60]

Throughout the year 1811, alarm at the menace of Tecumseh's confederacy and conviction that the British were instrumental in its formation and support grew rapidly among government officials and the people of the West. Governor Harrison wrote in February to the Secretary of War: "If the intentions of the British Government are pacific, the Indian department of

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[60] Harrison wrote from Vincennes, July 4, 1810: "The treaties made by me last fall, were concluded upon principles as liberal toward the Indians as my knowledge of the views and opinions of the government would allow.... But, sir, the President may rest assured, that the complaints of injury, with regard to the sale of lands, is a mere pretense, suggested to the prophet by British partisans and emissaries." To Secretary Eustis. Dawson, *Harrison*, p. 151. About this time too, Governor Harrison learned that "a Miami chief, who has just returned from his annual visit to Malden, after having received the accustomed donation of goods, was thus addressed by Elliot, the British agent: 'My son, keep your eyes fixed on me—my tomahawk is now up—be you ready, but do not strike till I give the signal.'" Ibid., p. 153. The incident may be fictitious, but it doubtless represents what the West was thinking. From Chicago and St. Louis came reports of Indian hostility and approaching war; and from the latter place it was reported that the Sacks had "absolutely acceded to the confederacy [Tecumseh's], and a party of them had gone off to Detroit [Malden presumably is meant], no doubt for arms and ammunition." Ibid., p. 177.

While Harrison was receiving these reports, Captain Johnston was writing from Fort Wayne to the Secretary of War that "about one hundred Sawkeys have returned from the British agent, who supplied them liberally with everything they stood in want of. The party received forty-seven rifles, and a number of fusils, with plenty of powder and lead. This is sending firebrands into the Mississippi country, inasmuch as it will draw numbers of our Indians to the

Upper Canada have not been made acquainted with them: for they have very lately said every thing to the Indians, who visited them, to excite them against us."[61]

In July a group of citizens of Knox County, Indiana, met at Vincennes and adopted resolutions demanding that the Indian settlement at Tippecanoe—one hundred and fifty miles up the Wabash—be broken up. The wish was natural, in view of the serious menace which the Prophet's town held over the heads of the Knox County settlers;[62] but it was significant that the British were charged with responsibility for the whole situation. "We are fully convinced," said the resolutions, "that the formation of the combination, headed by the Shawanee prophet, is a British scheme, and that the agents of that power are constantly exciting the Indians to hostilities against the United States."[63] Similar views were reflected in resolutions adopted by residents of St. Clair County, Illinois, which mentioned

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British side, in the hope of being treated with the same liberality." Aug. 7, 1810. *Am. State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I, 799.

A month later (September 11, 1810) the Kentucky *Gazette* copied from the *Western Sun* an article from the editor of the latter paper, describing the recent interview between Governor Harrison and Tecumseh. "We have always been of opinion," said the writer, "that the confederacy which has been formed by the Prophet, was the effect of British intrigue; and we have never doubted that the secret agents of that power, which are known to exist in every part of America, but particularly in the Indian country, gave it all the confidence in their power."

[61] *Am. State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I, 800.

[62] Adams, *United States*, VI, 78, 79.

[63] *Am. State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I, 802.

"the seditious village of Peoria, the great nursery of hostile Indians and traitorous British Indian traders."[64]

Meanwhile the *Kentucky Gazette* was warning its readers of the British-Indian menace in outspoken language:

"It would seem from the attitude of the Indians—the combination of the Northern and Southern tribes—the conference at Malden—the circumstances attendant on the mission of *Foster*—the late arrival of regular troops in Canada, that the British ministry were planning *'another expedition.'* . . .

"From the friendly course pursued by Mr. Jefferson, towards our red neighbors, and which has been followed by Mr. Madison, we had supposed the Indians would never more treat us otherwise than as brethren. But we have been mistaken—British intrigue and British gold, it seems, has greater influence with them of late than American justice and benevolence. . . . We have in our possession information which proves beyond doubt, the late disturbances to be owing to the too successful intrigues of British emissaries with the Indians."[65]

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[64] Ibid., I, 803.

[65] *Kentucky Gazette,* Aug. 27, 1811. The same article was printed in the Chillicothe (Ohio) *Independent Republican,* Sept. 6, 1811. The Circleville *Fredonian* (successor to the last named paper) printed similar articles Sept. 19 and Oct. 16. The issue of Oct. 16 also contained a report from Nashville that "propositions have been made the Chickasaw Indians by the British, through the Northern Indians, to join in a war against the U. States."

Governor Harrison, representative of "American justice and benevolence" toward the Indians, was at this time planning to open the way to a military career by an attack on the Indian village at Tippecanoe.[66] But he knew that war with England was probable, and suspected that the regiment of regular troops now on their way to him from Pittsburgh, were destined "to our frontiers bordering on Upper Canada." More important than his own ideas on the subject was his estimate of the spirit of the western people, whom he knew if any one knew them. "The people of this Territory [Indiana] and Kentucky," he wrote, "are extremely pressing in offers of their service for an expedition into the Indian Country. Any number of men might be obtained for this purpose or for a march into Canada."[67]

Early in September it was reported to Harrison "that defection is evidenced amongst all the Tribes from the Wabash to the Mississippi and the Lakes. That the Indians of the Wabash, Illinois, etc., have recently visited the British agent at Malden. That they are now returning from thence with a larger supply of goods than is ever known to have been distributed to them before. That rifles or fusees are given to those who are unarmed and powder and lead to all. And that the language and measures of the Indians indicate nothing but war."[68] Harrison passed on the information to the War Department a few days later (September 17,

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[66] Adams, *United States,* VI, 84, 85.
[67] *Burton Hist. Coll. Pamphlets,* No. 6, p. 217.
[68] Ibid., p. 218.

1811), with additional details of the extent of British subsidies: "A trader of this country was lately in the King's store at Malden, and was told that the quantity of goods for the Indian department, which has been sent out this year, exceeded that of common years by £20,000 sterling. It is impossible to ascribe this profusion to any other motive than that of instigating the Indians to take up the tomahawk; it cannot be to secure their trade, for all the peltries collected on the waters of the Wabash, in one year, if sold in the London market, would not pay the freight of the goods which have been given the Indians."[69]

Harrison, however, went on to say that, "although I am decidedly of opinion that the tendency of the British measures is hostility to us, candor obliges me to inform you, that, from two Indians of different tribes, I have received information that the British agent absolutely dissuaded them from going to war against the United States." That the compulsion of candor was necessary to bring the governor to pass on this last bit of information is an interesting commentary on his state of mind; but the information itself is perfectly consistent with the other facts of the situation. General Brock wrote, after Harrison's battle with the Indians, that the latter had been "implicitly told not to look for assistance from us," but the phrase occurs in a letter whose main purpose was to point out how the effective aid of the Indians was to be secured and used

[69] *Am. State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I, 801.

against the Americans.[70] Throughout the period of the rise of Tecumseh, the British had dissuaded the Indians from beginning a war against the United States; but the purpose of this policy was to allow time for the consolidation of the confederacy, that the aid of the Indians might be the more effective when needed.[71]

Early in November came Harrison's badly managed campaign ending in the battle of Tippecanoe.[72] From the facts already presented it is clear that the blood there shed would be added to the grievances already existing against the British and would bring the West to an eagerness for war without precedent in the entire controversy. "The *blood of our murdered countrymen must be revenged,*" wrote Andrew Jackson to Harrison. "I do hope that Government will see that it is necessary to act efficiently and that this hostile band which must be excited to war by the secret agents of Great Britain must be destroyed."[73] The battle of Tippecanoe gave inestimable support to the war party in the Twelfth Congress, now assembled in Washington for its first session.

The war party, composed of western men and "radical, expansionist, malcontent politicians of the east," which had existed in Congress since 1810 at least,[74] found itself in full control when the Twelfth Congress met. Clay, the most prominent of the "war hawks,"

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[70] *Mich. Pioneer & Hist. Coll.*, XV, 57, (Dec. 2, 1811.)
[71] Adams, *United States*, VI, 85.
[72] Ibid., VI, chap. v.
[73] *Burton Hist. Coll. Pamphlets*, No. 6, p. 263.
[74] Anderson, *William Branch Giles*, p. 173.

came now to the House of Representatives, where he was at once chosen speaker. He was supported in his warlike policy by members from the frontier sections of the northern states, such as Peter B. Porter of New York and John A. Harper of New Hampshire; by almost the entire delegation of the western states—Worthington of Ohio and Pope of Kentucky, both in the Senate, were the only important exceptions—by a fair proportion of the members from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina; and by a very able and aggressive group of young men from South Carolina and Georgia—Calhoun, Cheves, Lowndes, Crawford, Troup, and others—men who had reasons of their own for promoting a war of expansion.

It was soon apparent that the war to which this party was committed was to be no such purely defensive war as the Tenth Congress had contemplated, but that it was to be waged aggressively and with the conquest of Canada as a major object. Some Easterners might agree with Monroe that Canada might be invaded, "not as an object of the war but as a means to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion,"[75] but the West was more of the mind of a correspondent of the Philadelphia *Aurora*, "who wrote that if England were to restore all impressed seamen and make compensation for all her depredations we should listen to no terms that did not include Upper Canada."[76]

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[75] *Writings of James Monroe*, V, 205.
[76] Anderson, "Insurgents of 1811," *A. H. A. Report*, 1911, I, 172.

President Madison's annual message, delivered to Congress on November 5, contained language that could plainly be interpreted as meaning war. After touching upon the obdurate persistence of Great Britain in attacking American commerce, he went on to say: "With this evidence of hostile inflexibility, in trampling on rights which no independent nation can relinquish, Congress will feel the duty of putting the United States into an armor and an attitude demanded by the crisis, and corresponding with the national spirit and expectations."[77] To deal with that part of the message concerned with foreign relations, Speaker Clay appointed a select committee, upon which he placed a group of the most reliable war men—Porter, Calhoun, Grundy, Harper, and Desha.[78] The committee reported on November 29 a set of six resolutions recommending an increase of ten thousand men for the regular army, a levy of fifty thousand volunteers, the outfitting of all vessels of war not in active service, and the arming of merchant vessels.[79]

It was in the House debate on these resolutions that the war party frankly revealed their designs upon Canada. Mr. Porter, chairman of the committee, speaking on December 6, explained that in addition to the injury which American privateers could inflict upon British commerce, "there was another point where we could attack her, and where she would feel our power still

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[77] *Annals of Congress*, 12 Cong., I, 13.
[78] Ibid., I, 342, 343.
[79] Ibid., I, 377.

more sensibly. We could deprive her of her extensive provinces lying along our borders to the north. These provinces were not only immensely valuable in themselves, but almost indispensable to the existence of Great Britain, cut off as she now in a great measure is from the north of Europe. He had been credibly informed that the exports from Quebec alone amounted during the last year, to near six millions of dollars, and most of these too in articles of the first necessity—in ship timber and in provisions for the support of her fleets and armies. By carrying on such a war as he had described . . . we should be able in a short time to remunerate ourselves tenfold for all the spoliations she had committed on our commerce."[80]

Grundy of Tennessee, three days later, dwelt upon the peculiar advantage to the Westerner to be derived from war. "We shall drive the British from our Continent—they will no longer have an opportunity of intriguing with our Indian neighbors, and setting on the ruthless savage to tomahawk our women and children. That nation will lose her Canadian trade, and, by having no resting place in this country, her means of annoying us will be diminished."[81] Rhea of Tennessee was equally explicit upon the object of the war—"That all that part of North America which joins the United States on the Northeast, North, and Northwest, shall be provided for in a mode which will forever thereafter put it out of the power of Great Britain, or of any Brit-

[80] Ibid., I, 416.
[81] Ibid., I, 426.

ish agent, trader, or factor, or company of British traders to supply Indian tribes with arms or ammunition; to instigate and incite Indians to disturb and harass our frontiers, and to murder and scalp helpless women and children."[82]

Two members of the House, one from Kentucky and one from New Hampshire, expounded the doctrine of Manifest Destiny. "I shall never die contented," announced R. M. Johnson, "until I see her [Great Britain's] expulsion from North America, and her territories incorporated with the United States. . . . In point of territorial limit, the map will improve its importance. The waters of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi interlock in a number of places, and the great Disposer of Human Events intended those two rivers should belong to the same people."[83] "The northern provinces of Britain are to us great and valuable objects," proclaimed Harper of New Hampshire. "Once secured to this Republic, and the St. Lawrence and the Lakes become the Baltic, and more than the Baltic to America; north of them a population of four millions may easily be supported; and this great outlet of the northern world should be at our command for our convenience and future security. To me, sir, it appears that the Author of Nature has marked our limits in the south, by the Gulf of Mexico; and on the north, by the regions of eternal frost."[84]

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[82] Ibid., I, 640.
[83] Ibid., I, 457, 458.
[84] Ibid., I, 657.

While Congress debated, reports continued to come in of British agents at work among the Indians. As a matter of fact, it would appear that presents to the Indians, and particularly ammunition, were less at this time than previously. Claus wrote General Brock from Amherstburg in June, 1812, that during the last six months the Indians had received only 1211 pounds of powder—"nineteen hundred and twenty-one pounds less than at former periods—of lead, not one ounce has been issued to them since last December."[85] But a letter from Fort Wayne in February stated that two British emissaries had recently passed that way on a mission to the Prophet, and that "their business was to invite all the Indians to meet at Malden very early in the spring." Any event of this kind would of course receive the most unfavorable interpretation. The same letter gave other disturbing reports: "The Pottawatamy chief, Marpack, has been in the neighborhood of Malden since August last. . . . He has about one hundred and twenty of the best warriors in this country with him. . . . I know this chief is hostile inclined towards the United States, and have no hesitation in saying, that he is kept at that place by the British agents at Malden."[86]

If their relations with the Indians constituted a standing reason for driving the British from Canada, a special reason was furnished by the publication of the Henry Letters, for Henry had been in the employ of

[85] *Mich. Pioneer & Hist. Coll.*, XV, 89.
[86] *Am. State Papers, Ind. Aff.*, I, 805.

the Governor-General of Canada.[87] "Can any American, after this discovery," wrote Congressman Desha to a friend in Kentucky, "doubt the propriety of ousting the British from the continent, or hesitate in contributing his proportionable part of the expense which will necessarily be incurred in the laudable undertaking."[88]

The West no longer needed any such promptings from its representatives in Washington. The rise of Tecumseh and the Prophet, the battle of Tippecanoe, the outspoken position of their congressmen, together with the current belief that the British were behind all their Indian troubles, had resulted in an insistent demand from the Westerners for the conquest of Canada. The Lexington *Reporter* published in January a *"Franklinian Prescription—To cure Indian hostilities, and to prevent their recurrence:* Interpose the American arm between the hands of the English and their savage allies. This done, the occupation of the Canadas, New Brunswick and Nova-Scotia, would give us perpetual concord with the Indians; who would be obliged *to depend upon us* for supplies of Blankets, knives, gun-powder, etc."[89]

The Kentucky Legislature, which in the crisis of 1807-1808 had made no official mention of the border question, in its resolutions of February, 1812, added to Great Britain's violations of American rights at sea her

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[87] Adams, *United States,* VI, chap. ix.
[88] *The Reporter* (Lexington, Ky.), Mar. 24, 1812.
[89] Ibid., Jan. 21, 1812.

practice of "inciting the savages (as we have strong reasons to believe) to murder the inhabitants of our defenceless frontiers—furnishing them with arms and ammunition lately, to attack our forces; to the loss of a number of our brave men."[90]

Another indication of public opinion in Kentucky is the character of the toasts proposed at a Washington's Birthday dinner in Lexington. The banqueters drank to such toasts as *"Great Britain, when she comes to her senses*—If she continues lunatic, *Canada* and our arms!" or *"The American Congress*—If they barter the nation's honor under the false idea of temporary popularity, may they meet with the just scorn of an indignant people!"[91]

Public opinion in Ohio paralleled closely that of Kentucky. The Circleville *Fredonian* declared the "indignant spirits" of Americans could be appeased only "by the restoration of our rights, or the conquest of Canada."[92] Correspondents of Senator Thomas Worthington believed that if war came, "we would attack [and] conquer Cannady & humble their overbearing pride," or hoped that American troops would "sever Upper Canada from the British without delay."[93]

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[90] Ibid., Feb. 15, 1812.

[91] *Kentucky Gazette,* Feb. 25, 1812.

[92] *Fredonian,* Feb. 12, 1812. See also ibid., Mar. 18, 1812.

[93] James Caldwell to Worthington, Zanesville, Dec. 14, 1811. J. van Horne to Worthington, Zanesville, April 13, 1812. *Worthington, MSS.* For other expressions of the war spirit in Ohio, see Duncan McArthur to Worthington, Feb. 20, 1812; J. M. Couch to Worthington, Mar. 14, 1812; Levi Barber to Worthington, May 17, 1812. Ibid.

As the year advanced, the tone of the press grew even more determined. The *Fredonian* saw no hope of peace and security from the savages until "another WAYNE shall force *them* to become our friends, and another WASHINGTON exterminates from the Canadas, the base remains of royal perfidy." The British "must be for ever driven from all their possessions in America." The same paper professed itself eager to undertake a war against both France and Great Britain when it appeared that neither nation was willing to recognize American rights.[94] In April the *Kentucky Gazette* stated: "Great Britain has determined not to recede, and Congress seem at last to have got in earnest, and appear disposed to prepare for war. . . . The recruiting service has been actually commenced in various places, and large bodies of militia are to be raised to march for Detroit and other parts of our frontier. This is all preparatory to the invasion of Canada, now more than ever necessary, as presenting whilst in the possession of Britain, a never failing source of Indian hostility. Until those civilized allies of our Savage neighbors, are expelled from our continent, we must expect the frequent recurrence of the late scenes on the Wabash."[95]

The same paper could not suppress its wrath when the *National Intelligencer,* reputed to be the adminis-

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[94] *Fredonian,* Apr. 8, May 2, May 30, June 13, 1812.
[95] *Kentucky Gazette,* Apr. 14, 1812.

tration organ, hinted that war might yet be avoided. "Notwithstanding a mass of evidence of this kind [i. e. as to captures, impressment, Henry plots, etc.], the Intelligencer may talk of *negociation* and *'honorable accommodation'* with England; but when we view the effects of her policy in the *West*—when we hear of the tragic scenes that are now acting on our frontiers, after the slaughter of Tippecanoe, it is really surprising to hear that there is any doubt about the *'active preparations for warlike operations'* . . . We will only add, at this time, that we should much like to know the price which the 'Intelligencer' would receive as a compromise for the scalps of *Western Farmers.*"[96]

On May 26, three weeks before the declaration of war, the *Gazette* gave what appears like a parting injunction to Congress: "Can it be expected that those savage butcheries will have an end until we take possession of Malden and other British forts on the Lakes? And must the settlements in our territories be entirely destroyed, and the blood of the women and children drench the soil before this can be done? . . . What will our Congress say?" In similar tone the *Reporter* of May 30 declared: "Britain has commenced war in the Western Country, equally so as France would have done, was she to burn New York. The citizens of the Eastern States, and members in Congress, may abandon 7,000 seamen—they may term it, a *trifling impro-*

[96] Ibid., Apr. 21, 1812.

priety on the part of England, but the old Revolutionary Heroes here are not to be deceived by the misrepresentations of any man whatever. The Government MUST not abandon the Western Country to the British."

Thus by the end of the spring of 1812, the whole frontier country from New Hampshire to Kentucky was insisting that the British must be expelled from Canada. The demand had been of slow growth. Taking its origin from the ideas of Revolutionary statesmen, it was fed from various sources—from jealousy of the British fur trade, from exasperation at British contempt for the American flag at sea, from the alluring vision of a continent destined to recognize a single sovereignty—but unquestionably most of all from the conviction that the British in Canada were in unholy alliance with the western Indians, and that only by cutting off the Indians from British support could the West gain peace and security. Only thus could the Westerner be free to continue that policy of "justice and benevolence" toward the Indians, which consisted in pushing the boundaries of the white settlements ever farther into the Indian country.[97] Other motives—

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[97] For further discussions of this phase of the question see Slocum, *The Ohio Country between the Years 1783 and 1815;* Lewis, "A Re-analysis of the Causes of the War of 1812," *Americana (American Historical Magazine),* VI, 506-516; 577-585; Coleman, "The Ohio Valley in the Preliminaries of the War of 1812," *Miss. Valley Hist. Review,* VII, 39-50. Abel, Annie H., *The History of Events Resulting in Indian Consolidation West of the Mississippi, A. H. A. Reports,*

commercial, political, punitive—played a part; but the overmastering desire of the people of the Northwest was to feel free to develop their country without peril from those Indian conspiracies which were universally believed to have their origin in British Canada.

1906, Vol. I, especially chap. iii. L. M. Hacker, "Western Land Hunger and the War of 1812" (*Miss. Valley Hist. Rev.*, X, 365-395), minimizes the Indian menace and suggests land hunger as the motive of the West. I am unable to agree with his conclusions.

CHAPTER II

The Lure of the Spanish Provinces

I

If the Northwest, from 1783 to 1811, had harbored a suppressed desire for Canada, the Southwest had found it either impossible or unnecessary to suppress entirely its passion for the Spanish provinces. At first Florida and Louisiana, and after 1803 Florida and Mexico, had been the goals to which the ambitious turned their eyes, and scarcely a year had passed without some attempt by restless frontiersmen to subvert Spanish rule in some portion of His Catholic Majesty's dominions. Here land and the control of transportation routes had been the principal aims of the expansionists, but with these had been mingled other motives —the dread of Spanish influence among the Indians, the fear that Florida might be used by Spain or some other power as a base of operations against the United States, and the desire to secure full control of the Gulf of Mexico.

In the north, the direction of the pioneer movement was westward and left Canada practically undisturbed. In the south, migration tended to move southwestward,

and pioneers from the United States began early to penetrate into the Spanish lands.[1] The Americans were the first to discover the agricultural value of the Mississippi lands, and by 1790 it was reported, perhaps with exaggeration, that there were three thousand American farms in the Spanish territory between Natchez and New Orleans. John Pope, who made a journey down the Mississippi in 1791, found the country about Natchez and below "pretty thickly inhabited by Virginians, Carolinians, Georgians, and some few stragglers from the Eastern States."[2] The Mississippi was no barrier to these ambitious settlers. Boone settled in Missouri and received a grant of land from the Spanish Government, and he was followed by many other Americans. The bishop of Louisiana complained, about 1800, that "the Americans had scattered themselves over the country almost as far as Texas and corrupted the Indians and creoles by the example of their own restless and ambitious temper."[3]

These settlers, the bishop complained, had their eyes on Mexico. Certainly the exaggerated stories of Mexican wealth attracted not only peaceful settlers but political adventurers with grand ideas of empire-building. James O'Fallon, William Blount, and Philip Nolan

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[1] Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West*, IV, 251-2. Hatcher, "The Louisiana Background of the Colonization of Texas," *Southwestern Hist. Quart.*, XXIV, 169-194; Hatcher, "Conditions in Texas Affecting the Colonization Problem, 1795-1801," ibid., XXV, 81-97.

[2] Winsor, *Westward Movement*, pp. 372, 518-519.

[3] Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, IV, 253.

were among those who, between 1790 and 1800, dreamed of Mexico as a field in which they might win power and glory.[4] The Spanish were convinced that the Americans, "even in their present weakness . . . conceive vast projects for the conquest of the western shore of the Mississippi."[5] The purchase of Louisiana by no means satisfied these people. John Adair wrote Wilkinson from Kentucky in 1804 that "the Kentuckyans are full of enterprise and although not poor, as greedy after plunder as ever the old Romans were, Mexico glitters in our Eyes—the word is all we wait for."[6] Burr, in his ill-starred enterprise in 1806, merely attempted to do what the whole Southwest dreamed of,[7] and after his failure the border was still peopled by men of like mind. "By the summer of 1808 the Neutral Ground [established between the Red River and the Sabine by agreement between Wilkinson and the Spanish] was filled with adventurers, who crossed the Sabine, bartered with the natives, caught wild horses, and gave Nemecio de Salcedo no end of trouble. They were recognized as Burr's legitimate successors. June 28, 1808, Louis de Clovet, consul for Spain in New Orleans, wrote Salcedo, 'From what I can hear and penetrate it seems that the project of Burr is coming to life.' "[8] In fact, the Spanish believed that the Burr

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[4] Winsor, *op. cit.*, pp. 378-380. Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, IV, 212, 213, 266.
[5] McCaleb, *The Aaron Burr Conspiracy*, p. 8.
[6] Durrett Collection *MSS., Misc. Letters.* (Dec. 10, 1804.)
[7] McCaleb, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
[8] Ibid., p. 366. Salcedo was Commandant-General of the Interior Provinces.

conspiracy had a continuous existence from 1806 to 1812, when, as we shall see, an expedition of Americans actually invaded Texas.[9]

In the end, however, it was not the filibuster but the peaceful settler who was to bring first West Florida and later Texas into the United States. The tide of peaceful penetration was running strongly before the end of the century. Jefferson realized its import when he wrote to Washington of Governor Quesada's invitation to foreigners to settle in Florida. "I wish a hundred thousand of our inhabitants would accept the invitation," wrote Jefferson. "It will be the means of delivering to us peaceably what may otherwise cost us a war."[10] To most such settlers Spanish rule was distasteful, and they were soon ready, as Jefferson predicted, to take a hand in bringing their adopted country under the American flag.

But while American settlers were taking peaceful possession of farming lands in the Spanish territory, their brethren in Kentucky and Tennessee were repeatedly brought to the verge of hostilities by the irritating Spanish control over their transportation routes. Shut off by the mountain barrier from the cities of the Atlantic coast, these states were dependent for the marketing of their produce upon the rivers flowing to the Gulf of Mexico. The vital importance to these states of the free navigation of the Mississippi is too

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[9] Ibid., p. 86.

[10] *Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Washington ed.), III, 235. (Apr. 2, 1791.)

well known to need elaboration. Such was the urgency of this issue that Westerners could talk seriously of separation from the Confederation and union with Spanish Louisiana in order to gain the privilege, and as early as 1787 "the most audacious spirits talked of attacking New Orleans, and wresting Louisiana from Spain," in order at once to secure the Mississippi and gain added weight for the West in the national councils.[11]

The West found a warm advocate in Jefferson, the first Secretary of State. In 1787 he had written to Madison: "The act which abandons it [the Mississippi] is an act of separation between the eastern and the western country."[12] His instructions to Carmichael (Mar. 18, 1792) were most emphatic on this point. The rights of navigation and deposit, he argued, were "natural rights." Nature had provided an outlet for the commerce of the upper river valley, and no nation could legislate contrary to nature's decree.[13]

After many ups and downs and much warlike talk in the West, the Mississippi question was settled by the purchase of Louisiana. But the control of the Mississippi did not settle the transportation problem. The

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[11] Winsor, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

[12] *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, II, 87.

[13] *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.*, I, 247, 252, 257. Similarly, the constitution of Tennessee, drafted in 1796, declared: "An equal participation of the free navigation of the Mississippi is one of the inherent rights of the citizens of this State; it cannot, therefore, be conceded to any prince, potentate, person or persons whatever." Winsor, *op. cit.*, p. 559.

original instructions to Monroe and Livingston had directed them to negotiate for the purchase of New Orleans and West Florida,and the House committee which recommended the necessary appropriation, after dwelling at length upon the importance of the Mississippi to the West, went on to show that not only the Mississippi but the rivers flowing through West Florida were essential parts of the western transportation system. Upon the Mobile and the Apalachicola and their tributaries, the greater part of Mississippi Territory must depend for access to the sea—for the marketing of its products and the importation of its supplies—while eastern Tennessee was scarcely less vitally concerned in the route which, by a short portage, crossed from the Tennessee at Muscle Shoals to the branches of the Mobile, and so reached the Gulf. East Florida the committee also thought desirable, because of the advantage it would confer in trade with the West Indies, and because it would, "by giving us the Gulf of Mexico for our southern boundary . . . render us less liable to attack, in what is now deemed the most vulnerable part of the Union."

"From the aforegoing view of facts," the report continued, "it must be seen that the possession of New Orleans and the Floridas will not only be required for the convenience of the United States, but will be demanded by their most imperious necessities. . . . If we look forward to the free use of the Mississippi, the Mobile, the Apalachicola, and the other rivers of the West, by ourselves and our posterity, New Orleans and

the Floridas must become a part of the United States, either by purchase or by conquest."[14]

After the purchase of Louisiana, the control of the Mississippi passed into American hands. The mouths of the Mobile and Apalachicola, however, remained under Spanish control, and the hindrances opposed to the free use of the Mobile constituted a standing grievance for the next decade. The Mobile, with the Alabama and Tombigbee, formed an old and well known route from the Gulf to the valley of the Tennessee.[15] Between the Spanish boundary and the Indian lands, on the Mobile and Tombigbee, were many American settlers and a government post, Fort Stoddert. The products of the soil could not be marketed, nor the fort supplied with ammunition, except through the mouth of the river, and the terms of its use were a perennial subject of dispute.[16] The settlers in Mississippi Territory and the people of Tennessee became clamorous for the opening of the river routes. Diplomacy failing, they were ready for filibustering or open war to accomplish their purpose. Conditions on the Mobile, wrote Madison to Armstrong in May, 1807, were "kindling a flame which was not easily manageable."[17]

While the people of the Southwest hungered for Spanish land and the control of the waterways, they feared the Spanish influence among the Indians. Be-

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[14] *Annals of Congress*, 7 Cong., 2 sess., pp. 371-374.
[15] Winsor, *op. cit.*, p. 380.
[16] Cox, *West Florida Controversy*, pp. 117, 140, 196, etc.
[17] Ibid., p. 271.

tween the American settlements in Mississippi Territory and the southern border of Tennessee lay the lands of the great Creek confederacy. Among these Indians, in the years before the treaty of San Lorenzo el Real, the intrigues of the Spanish had been notorious.[18] After 1795 there seems to have been little or no attempt by the Spanish to employ the Indians aggressively. In the face of the American encroachments on Spanish territory it need excite no wonder that the Spanish officials sometimes thought of using the Indians for their defense. Rumors of their attempts to do so were common enough.[19] The fact that the Spanish were acting in self-defense of course made no impression upon the Americans. The belief that they had used or would use the Indians in war was sufficient to condemn the Spaniards in American eyes. The expulsion of the Spanish from Florida and the removal of the Creeks beyond the Mississippi came to be viewed as parts of the same inevitable movement.[20]

Lands, waterways, Indians—these were the three words most often used by the frontiersman in denouncing the Spanish ownership of Florida. The same concerns were uppermost too in convincing the men in Washington that the American flag must fly over the Floridas. Those who looked to the future could see also that these territories, while in alien hands, presented a menace of possible invasion. Should war oc-

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[18] Winsor, *op. cit.*, pp. 522, 543. Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, IV, 77.
[19] Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 210, 389, 411, 444, etc.
[20] Nashville *Clarion*, copied in Niles' *Register*, Sept. 26, 1812.

cur with Spain or with an ally of Spain, Florida with its several fine harbors would serve as a convenient base of operations against the United States. This danger was recognized in the House of Representatives report quoted above, in the assertion that the acquisition of both the Floridas, "by giving us the Gulf of Mexico for our southern boundary, would render us less liable to attack, in what is now deemed the most vulnerable part of the Union." The United States had little fear of Spain, but when Great Britain became Spain's ally in the war against Napoleon at the same time that Great Britain and the United States were drifting toward war, the Spanish foothold in the Floridas presented a real danger. The result, a policy somewhat similar to that which in later years was adopted in regard to Cuba, was formulated in the Congressional Joint Resolution of January 15, 1811, which declared "that the United States, under the peculiar circumstances of the existing crisis, cannot, without serious inquietude, see any part of the said territory pass into the hands of any foreign power"; and the danger of such transfer was held to justify American occupation of the territory in question.[21]

The statesman with faith in his country's future as the great power of the western hemisphere found yet another argument for the acquisition of the Floridas. Those territories were necessary not only to a full rounding out of the nation's boundaries but to the con-

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[21] *U. S. Statutes at Large,* III, 471.

trol of the Gulf of Mexico, which obviously lay within its destiny. Jefferson, though not accustomed to think in terms of naval strategy, certainly recognized at this time as he did twenty years later, the vital importance of the Florida straits to the American mastery of that inland sea. Writing in 1823 of the possible acquisition of Cuba, he said: "The control which, with Florida Point, this island would give us over the Gulf of Mexico, and the countries and isthmus bordering on it, as well as all whose waters flow into it, would fill up the measure of our political wellbeing."[22] Jefferson's ideas on the subject were no less clear during his own presidency than during Monroe's; Cuba was often on his mind,[23] and the acquisition of Florida became a settled part of his policy.

Such were the motives that aligned people and government behind the demand for the annexation of the Floridas. We may now glance briefly at some of the efforts that were made to attain that object. The instructions under which Monroe and Livingston had acted had contemplated the purchase of the Floridas and the "island of New Orleans." The swiftly changing plans of Napoleon had thrown Louisiana instead into their arms. But within three weeks of the signing of the treaty, Livingston made the remarkable discovery that the cession included West Florida to the line of the Perdido river, thus embracing Mobile and

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[22] *Writings of Thomas Jefferson,* VII, 316.

[23] To Madison, Aug. 16, 1807. Ibid., V, 164. See also ibid., V, 442, 443-445.

its important affluents. The interpretation depended upon an ambiguous article in the treaty of cession. France ceded to the United States what she had received from Spain. Whether or not that included West Florida could not be absolutely determined from the terms of the treaty. Probably Napoleon made the terms intentionally vague to foster trouble between the United States and Spain. As a matter of fact, the French knew that they had not purchased West Florida from Spain and therefore could not cede it to the United States, and Napoleon presently had the Americans informed that they had not a shadow of a claim to it.[24] But Monroe, Madison, and Jefferson all accepted Livingston's view and thereafter consistently maintained—at least down to 1819—that the United States had bought West Florida in 1803.

To this very questionable claim to West Florida was presently added a claim to East Florida in satisfaction for injuries occasioned by unneutral Spanish conduct during the period of hostilities between the United States and France—the so-called spoliation claims.[25] For years neither intimidation nor diplomacy could bring Spain to accept the view of the United States.[26] But while European nations disregarded Jefferson's arguments and went counter to his predictions, the Ameri-

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[24] Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110

[25] *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, V, 164.

[26] Cox, *op. cit.*, gives an elaborate history of the controversy. See also Marshall, *A History of the Western Boundary of the Louisiana Purchase, 1819-1841*, chap. ii.

can-born inhabitants of West Florida were vindicating his prophecy of 1791.

Jefferson, it will be recalled, had predicted that American immigration into the Floridas would result in the peaceable transfer of those territories to the United States. One instance of the working of this process had already occurred. After the ratification of the treaty with Spain in 1795, which fixed the southern boundary of the United States at the 31st parallel, Andrew Ellicott, the agent sent to run the new boundary line, found the Spanish officials in the Natchez district unwilling to surrender the territory. The population of the district, however, was principally American and desirous of coming under American jurisdiction; the Spanish garrison was small; and Ellicott found it possible to foment a bloodless insurrection which placed the Spaniards in an impossible position and paved the way for the setting up of American authority in accordance with the terms of the treaty.[27] The method proved a convenient one for the acquisition of territory. To fulfill, not as in this case the terms of a treaty, but unsanctioned popular desires, it was to be employed presently in Florida and years later in Texas and California.

By the logic of race as well as by that of geography, West Florida now belonged to the United States. John Adair of Kentucky, who had lived in Florida for some years, informed Madison in 1809 that in the portion

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[27] Ibid., pp. 41-42, 50-52, 63.

west of the Pearl river, which contained five-sixths of the wealth and population of the province, nine-tenths of the people were Americans, and that all but a very few preferred the American government to any other.[28] Thus far these Americans had for the most part lived peaceably if not contentedly under the Spanish regime, but the overthrow of the Spanish government by Napoleon, with the consequent loosening of all the bonds of the empire, gave an opportunity for the realization of their true desires.

Omitting details,[29] it is sufficient to say here that in the summer and autumn of 1810, the people of the Baton Rouge district of West Florida revolted against the Spanish authorities, and with the connivance of the American government and the assistance of American citizens,[30] declared themselves an independent state; that the United States government took advantage of the subversion of Spanish authority to enforce its claim to that portion of the province west of the Perdido; and that by the summer of 1811 all that portion was

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[28] Adair to Madison, Jan. 9, 1809. *Madison Papers, MSS.*

[29] See Cox, *op. cit.*, chaps. ix-xiii.

[30] Connivance by the U. S. Government: In the summer of 1810, Governor Claiborne of New Orleans Territory, with Madison's approval, commissioned William Wykoff, Jr., of New Orleans, to obtain from the inhabitants of West Florida a request for intervention by the United States. Cox, *op. cit.*, p. 330. Assistance from Americans: A letter from Natchez, Oct. 3, 1810, stated that "numbers from this and the Orleans territory have joined the patriots." Nashville, *Clarion*, Oct. 19, 1810.

under American control, with the exception of the city and fortifications of Mobile.

Meanwhile, Governor Folch of West Florida, before the American occupation of Baton Rouge was known to him, had made a tentative offer, in case he were not reenforced by January 1, 1811, to turn over his province to the United States.[31] He had found the insurgents of Baton Rouge and the would-be filibusters who congregated on the border above Mobile, more than he could cope with with his existing force.

Upon receipt of Folch's offer, the President laid it before Congress, together with another enclosure and a special secret message. The second enclosure was a note from Morier, the British *chargé d' affaires,* protesting against the American occupation of Baton Rouge. Madison hinted at dark designs behind the British protest, and recommended, first, a declaration from Congress that the United States could not, "without serious inquietude," see the Floridas pass from Spanish hands into those of another power; and second, a consideration of "the expediency of authorizing the Executive to take temporary possession of any part or parts of the said territory, in pursuance of arrangements which may be desired by the Spanish authorities. . . . The wisdom of Congress," added the President, "will at the same time determine how far it may be expedient to provide for the event of a subversion of the Spanish

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[31] Folch to the Secretary of State, Dec. 2, 1810. *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.,* III, 398.

authorities within the territory in question, and apprehended occupancy thereof by any other foreign Power."[32]

Congress acted promptly. January 15, 1811, the President received and signed a resolution and an act. The resolution declared that, "considering the influence which the destiny of the territory adjoining the southern border of the United States may have upon their security, tranquillity, and commerce, . . . the United States . . . cannot, without serious inquietude, see any part of the said territory pass into the hands of any foreign Power." The act authorized the President to take possession of all or any part of Florida east of the Perdido (the portion west of the Peridido was regarded as being already American soil) in case an agreement to that effect should be reached with the *local* authorities, "or in the event of an attempt to occupy the said territory, or any part thereof, by any foreign government," and to employ the army and navy of the United States for that purpose. Any territory so occupied was to be held as still subject to negotiation.[33] The "foreign government" whose designs were regarded as a menace was of course England. Monroe so stated to the French minister.[34]

Armed with this authority from Congress, and apparently taking Folch's offer in good faith, Madison

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[32] Message, *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.*, III, 394; Folch's letter, ibid. p. 398; Morier's note, ibid. p. 399.
[33] Resolution and Act, *U. S. Statutes at Large*, III, 471.
[34] Adams, *United States*, VI, 241.

appointed two commissioners to treat with the Spanish governor for the transfer of the territory. These were Colonel McKee, the Indian agent, and General George Mathews of Georgia, a Revolutionary veteran and an enthusiastic annexationist.

To McKee's letter explaining the nature of the mission committed to himself and Mathews,[35] and to the later communications of the two Americans, Folch replied by definite refusal to yield a foot of soil. He pointed out that his formerly desperate situation had been relieved both by the disbanding of the filibusters and by the receipt of funds from his superiors; and he added that the American occupation of Baton Rouge was a hostile act and an insult to his nation, in view of which his offer of December was automatically cancelled. The negotiations closed with a fruitless interview between Mathews and Folch in April, 1811. McKee and Mathews were thereupon directed to turn their task over to Governor Claiborne, though Mathews was given discretionary power to continue his mission with respect to East Florida.[36]

The Spanish clung tenaciously to the fort and town of Mobile, and no attempt was made to dislodge them. Their occupancy, however, had no legal recognition from the United States. The entire territory west of the Perdido was formally incorporated in the United States, the portion west of the Pearl becoming, in

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[35] Cox, *op. cit.*, pp. 523-524.
[36] Ibid., pp. 525, 527-528.

April, 1812, a part of the new state of Louisiana, while the eastern portion was assigned to Mississippi Territory. In August, 1812, Governor Holmes organized the latter portion as a county of the territory, but did not attempt to enforce his jurisdiction in Mobile itself. The Spanish, on their part, made no further pretense of collecting duties, but their presence within American territory was an annoyance in itself, and a menace after the opening of the war with Great Britain.

II

Before the appointment of Mathews and McKee by the State Department under the act of January 15, 1811, Mathews had already been acting as a special agent of the Secretary of War on the Florida frontier,[37] and had been engaged in negotiations with the Spanish officials at Mobile in the hope of persuading them to surrender their posts to the United States.

But Mathews, as a citizen and former governor of Georgia, was interested quite as much in gaining East Florida as in completing the annexation of its western neighbor. In the closing months of 1810 and the first half of 1811 he hovered between Fort Stoddert and St. Mary's, Georgia. Whether he had at this time approached the Spanish officials at St. Augustine is uncertain, but he had at any rate communicated with residents of the Spanish province and with individuals on the American side of the St. Mary's river, with the

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[37] Ibid., pp. 458-459.

purpose of stimulating in East Florida an independence movement akin to that which had recently developed at Baton Rouge.

The first intimation we have of his activities in this locality is contained in a letter of January 7, 1811, from George J. F. Clarke, acting surveyor-general of East Florida, to Henry White, the governor at St. Augustine. Clarke wrote the governor of information from the American side of the border to the effect that Mathews had official instructions to assist a revolutionary movement in East Florida, which was supposed to be nearly ready, and that it was only necessary for a few Spanish subjects to meet on their side of the St. Mary's river, declare their independence, and call across the river for aid, in order to afford him a pretext for coming to their support with adequate help. Clarke discredited the idea of a large revolutionary party in East Florida. At least among those living on the St. Mary's, he believed, "however their principals [sic] might tend under other circumstances, the rapid progression they are making towards welth [sic] through the medium of lumber insures them under the present: self-interest being the most prominent impulse in Man, Generally."[38]

Clarke might have added other circumstances which made the people of the St. Mary's reluctant to exchange the Spanish for the American flag. Not only was the lumber trade lucrative, but the various restric-

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[38] *East Fla. Papers, Var. Subjects, 1808-1812 July.* The letter is in English.

tive measures recently adopted by the United States—the law prohibiting the importation of slaves, the Embargo and Non-intercourse acts—put a great premium upon smuggling, and the St. Mary's river offered the greatest facilities for such clandestine trade. Indeed, the Spanish town of Fernandina, on Amelia island just south of the St. Mary's, had become a veritable smugglers' paradise, euphemistically described by a later commentator as "a kind of neutral or free port, at which a large and lucrative trade was carried on with all nations."[39]

But the same conditions that inclined the Spanish traders of the St. Mary's to loyalty to the Spanish flag, added to the determination of the Americans to have the province, and Mathews had little difficulty in persuading the United States government that a revolution could be effected and the country turned over to the United States. Mathews visited Washington in January, 1811, and talked with Madison.[40] He was probably there on January 26, when Robert Smith penned the joint commission to him and McKee. He apparently had extensive conferences with members of the Administration. Benjamin Hawkins, who saw him in March at the Creek Agency, wrote Madison: "He was sincerely impressed with the reception you gave

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[39] Campbell to Hamilton, Feb. 25, 1811. *Captains' Letters,* 1811, Vol. I (Navy Dept. MSS.) Opinion of Judge Bronson in U. S. vs. Ferreira. *Senate Misc. Doc. 55,* 1 sess., 36 Cong., pp. 36-37.

[40] Ralph Isaacs to Monroe, July 3, 1814. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 44. (State Dept. MSS.)

him and the confidence you reposed in him as well as of all the heads of departments."[41] This may well be borne in mind in connection with Mathew's later assertion that he had confidential instructions which justified his whole procedure.[42]

The President, as we have seen, signed on January 15 an Act of Congress authorizing the occupation of all that portion of the Floridas east of the Perdido river, upon condition either of an understanding with the local authorities, or "in the event of an attempt to occupy the said territory, or any part thereof, by any foreign government," with the proviso that any territory so occupied should be held subject to future negotiation. This act, moreover, authorized the President, for the purpose of occupying and holding the territory in question, to employ "any part of the army and navy of the United States which he may deem necessary." The President thereupon named Mathews and McKee to carry out the intent of the law, and instructions were issued to them on January 26 by the Secretary of State.[43]

The portion of these instructions which concerns us here is that relating to East Florida. This portion of

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[41] Hawkins to Madison, Mar. 11, 1811. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 41.

[42] Mathews to Monroe, June 22, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.*, Division of Publications.

[43] *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.*, III, p. 571. The instructions are here erroneously ascribed to Monroe, who did not take office until the following April. They were issued by Robert Smith. *Domestic Letters*, XV, pp. 1-5. (State Dept. MSS.)

the Secretary's letter directed the commissioners to take possession of East Florida in either of two contingencies: first, if they should "discover an inclination in the Governor of East Florida, or in the existing local authority, amicably to surrender that province into the possession of the United States"; second, "in case of the actual appearance of any attempt to take possession by a foreign Power." The commissioners were assured that if in carrying out their instructions they should need military or naval aid, they would receive it upon application to the commanding officers at the posts nearest the scene of activity. Orders in conformity with this last provision were issued by the War Department to officers on the southern border, and by the Navy Department to officers on the New Orleans station.[44] No specific orders on this head were issued to Captain Hugh G. Campbell, commanding the naval force in the southeast, but the instructions which he presently received indicated plainly that he was to cooperate with the commissioners.

The government at once began preparations to take advantage of the revolution which Mathews had given reason to expect in East Florida. Captain Campbell, at Charleston, was instructed to hurry at least five gunboats to the St. Mary's river, together with the sloops *Wasp* and *Nautilus*.[45] Preparations for the army were

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[44] *Military Book*, V, 54. (War Dept. MSS.) *Letters to Officers, Ships of War*, IX, 274. (Navy Dept. MSS.)

[45] Hamilton to Campbell, Jan. 22, Jan. 26, 1811. *Letters to Officers, Ships of War*, IX, 269, 272.

going forward simultaneously. Campbell was instructed to ship to St. Mary's, Georgia, twenty barrels of powder and five hundred pounds of lead for the use of the War Department. Captain T. A. Smith of the army was ordered to move his small force to Point Petre, on the St. Mary's river near the town of St. Mary's, to make ready for active service, and to "practice your men with the musket and rifle."[46]

The government was, therefore, prepared to take some military action with the object of effecting the occupation of East Florida. The orders to Campbell, it is true, related the hastening of the naval force to the St. Mary's to the flagrancy of the slave trade on that river, but the extent of the preparations—the ordering of the two sloops of war to the river—the additional military measures, and above all the coincidence in time between these measures and the passage of the bill authorizing the occupation of Florida, leave no doubt of the general purpose of the armament. But just how far the government concurred in Mathew's plans for the use of this force is a question which must for the present remain unanswered.

Mathews, meanwhile, returned to St. Mary's, whence, on February 25, he reported to the Secretary of State.

"On my arivil hear," he wrote, "I found the Gentelmin hows [whose] names I give [gave (?)] you well disposid to sarve our Goverment. But," he added sig-

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[46] Hamilton to Campbell, Jan. 9, Jan. 25, 1811. Ibid., pp. 261, 272. Eustis to Smith, Jan. 26, 1811. *Military Book,* V, 54.

nificantly, "thare has not one solder arived or one armed vesil or a Gun Boat in this rivar, from this cause its thought not propar to attemp Eney thing at present." By April, however, when he should have returned from Mobile, he hoped, as he said, "to have it in my power to carey the President's wishes in to afact [effect]."[47]

It is evident from this letter that Mathews was counting upon the aid of certain private individuals, whether on the American or Spanish side of the river he does not say, whose names he had given to Smith on his recent visit to Washington, but that in order "to carey the President's wishes in to afact," he regarded military aid as indispensable. This assistance, already provided for as we have seen, reached the river before his return in June. Meanwhile, Monroe replaced Smith in the State Department, and a letter from the new Secretary in June authorized Mathews to continue the prosecution of his mission in East Florida, "especially if you entertain any reasonable hope of success there."[48]

Not until June was Mathews again on the East Florida border. His journey thither had been hastened,

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[47] Mathews to Smith, Feb. 25, 1811. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs. Of all Mathews's correspondence in the State Department, this is the only letter written in his own hand. It bears out a much earlier statement by Andrew Ellicott that, although brave and honest, Mathews was extremely illiterate. Ellicott to Pickering, July 29, 1798. *Ellicott and Southern Boundary Volume* (State Dept. MSS.). In the spelling of Mathews's name I have followed the form used in his own signature and in nearly all the contemporary MSS.

[48] Monroe to Mathews, June 29, 1811. *Domestic Letters*, XVI, 191-192. (State Dept. MSS.)

as he wrote Monroe, by the death of Governor Henry White of East Florida. The change in governors, however, produced no change in the official attitude toward the United States. In two letters, of June 28 and August 3, 1811, Mathews explained the situation to Monroe. He reported the presence in the vicinity of St. Mary's of four American gunboats and two hundred troops—a force inadequate, he thought, for any ambitious designs. The existing government, he learned, would entertain no proposals for an amicable cession of the province. The inhabitants, however, were ripe for revolt, and if adequately supported could effect a revolution. In the letter of August 3 he suggested that "two hundred stand of arms and fifty horseman's swords," which might be sent to him at Point Petre, would enable the people to overturn the government; and he thought he could manage this transaction without compromising the United States. He had explained to the "discontents," he said, that the United States would be more likely to render "prompt and efficient aid" in the event of war with Great Britain, than if the negotiations with the British minister should terminate satisfactorily.[49]

This request for the covert aid of the government in revolutionizing East Florida received neither response nor rebuke from the Secretary of State. Mathews thought, no doubt,—and justly—that the Secretary's

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[49] Mathews to Monroe, June 28, Aug. 3, 1811. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs.

silence gave tacit approval to his measures. Yet he took pains to see that Monroe was thoroughly informed of his plans, and asked plainly enough to be relieved if the government disapproved his policy. In October he wrote from Oglethorpe County, Georgia, whither he had come, as he said, "in order to have an interview with Mr. Senator Crawford, that I deem of some importance to our common country, previous to his departure for Washington." He complained that his letter of August 3 had received no reply. To Crawford, he said, he had given full information of his operations and of the situation in East Florida, and to Crawford he referred Monroe for further details. He urged again the importance of securing the Floridas, and asserted that this could still be accomplished by the means he had already suggested.

Mathews now came to the point that manifestly was giving him concern—the question of how the administration viewed his proceedings. He mentioned a rumor that his powers had been revoked; he had given little credence to it and had continued with zeal to discharge the duties of his mission. But, said he, "should the information prove well founded I must entreat you to give me the earliest notice, for altho' I ever am ready to devote my best abilities to my country, yet I do not wish to remain in its employ any longer, than I can render it useful & acceptable services."[50]

Senator Crawford, upon his arrival in Washington,

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[50] Mathews to Monroe, Oct. 14, 1811. Ibid.

forwarded Mathews's letter to Monroe and promised to call for an interview as soon as the Senate should have convened.[51] We may assume that Monroe and Crawford talked over the situation on the Florida border, and we may perhaps see one result of their talk in a letter from Hamilton, the Secretary of the Navy, to Campbell. This letter, dated November 18, 1811, informed Campbell, who still lingered in Charleston, that "It is important that you proceed immediately to St. Mary's, and take in person the command of the flotilla there. You will therefore proceed without delay."[52]

It is only by inference that we can fathom Monroe's policy at this period. On the subject of Mathews's proposals he maintained—so far as the records show—a complete silence. He made no reply to Mathews's letters. When Mr. Foster, the British minister, addressed to him an outspoken protest upon the subject of Mathews's rumored proceedings, Monroe withheld his reply for two months, and then made no mention whatever of Mathews or his doings, but confined his statement to generalities about the interest of the United States in Florida.[53] Through Mathews himself, through Crawford, and through Foster, the United States Govern-

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[51] Crawford to Monroe, Nov. 5, 1811. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 35. (State Dept. MSS.)

[52] *Letters to Officers, Ships of War,* IX, 507.

[53] Foster to Monroe, Sept. 5, 1811. Monroe to Foster, Nov. 2, 1811. *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.,* III, 543-545. The somewhat insolent tone of Foster's note, together with his references to "the deep interest which His Royal Highness the Prince Regent takes in the security of Florida," not only gave Monroe an excuse for delay, but no doubt strengthened the

ment was fully informed of what was going on and of what was in prospect. Captain Smith and his detachment had been ordered to the scene and supplied with munitions. The gunboats had been ordered to St. Mary's, and Campbell was now told to hurry thither at once. Yet neither Mathews, Smith, nor Campbell was given any definite instructions as to the exact nature or limits of his activity. The only reasonable conclusion is that the government wished the plan to proceed under the auspices of Mathews, but preferred to avoid committing itself in any way, so that it might disavow the action of its agents should it prove expedient to do so.

While the government played this hands-off policy, Mathews was busily perfecting his plans for the stroke which should set up in East Florida a local authority favoring annexation to the United States. By representing that the United States was determined to take possession of the province, and holding out the promise of reward to those who assisted his measures and the threat of displeasure to those who obstructed them, he won a certain portion of the population to his side.[54]

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determination of the government to take Florida before it should fall a prey to Great Britain. In the preceding July, upon Foster's pressing the subject of East Florida, Monroe had virtually admitted—to the satisfaction at least of Foster—that it was quite possible the government might take advantage of an independence movement there as it had done in West Florida. Foster to Wellesley, July 5, 1811. *Foreign Office, American,* II, 5/76. (British Archives.)

[54] Judge Bronson's summary in *U. S. vs. Ferreira. Sen. Misc. Doc. No. 55,* 1 sess., 36 Cong., pp. 36-37. The rewards which

The most important of these was one J. H. McIntosh, described by Clarke as "a wealthy man, and of good education, but not influential with the government or people," who became one of the most conspicuous of the East Florida "patriots."[55]

As early as August, 1811, Estrada, the acting governor of the province, had forwarded to the Captain-General a letter from McIntosh to William Craig, a magistrate of the district of the St. John's river, who later joined the "patriots," revealing something of the intrigue in progress between McIntosh and Mathews.[56] In December and January Estrada forwarded further warnings of the intentions and preparations of the Americans, coming from the commandant at Fernandina and from De Onis, the unrecognized minister to the United States. There was not the least doubt, he thought, "of the depraved intentions of the Federal Government of the United States," and he was "employing the most energetic means of defence in order

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Mathews promised to those who would help the cause were, to each white man, 500 acres of land, freedom of religion, security of property, and payment of any salaries or wages due from the Spanish government, and for the Spanish officers and troops, enlistment in the U.S. army or transportation to a point of their own choosing. Estrada to De Onis, Aug. 14, 1811. *East Fla. Papers, To and From Min. and Con.,* 1809-1811.

[55] Testimony of G. J. F. Clarke in *Pons vs. U.S. Sen. Misc. Doc. No. 55,* 1 sess., 36 Cong., pp. 17 ff.

[56] Estrada to Someruelos, Aug. 2, 1811. *East Fla. Papers, Secret Correspondence to and from the Captain-General,* 1787-1813.

to protect the province from the invasion that threatens it."[57]

Mathews delayed for some months in the hope of some explicit word of approval from Monroe and of further military aid. He wrote Monroe in January that the situation in East Florida was unchanged, but that it would be desirable to have a company of artillery and another of infantry on the border "if government have any serious objects in view." He added that he feared the newly appointed governor, Kindelan, would, on his arrival at St. Augustine, "have the drawbridge repaired, which will render the fort more difficult to be taken."[58]

Like those preceding it, this letter apparently received no reply from Monroe, and no reinforcements of artillery or infantry arrived at St. Mary's. Mathews therefore undertook to do his best with the resources at his command. He and McIntosh now planned a *coup* by which the "patriots," assisted by volunteers from Georgia and from the United States encampment, should effect at a blow the capture of St. Augustine and of the Spanish governor, and thereupon, in the guise of the "local authorities," turn the province over to the United States. McIntosh wrote of the plan to G. M. Troup, a Georgia congressman who

[57] Estrada to Someruelos, Dec. 2, Dec. 13, 1811; Jan. 2, Jan. 9, Jan. 31, 1812. *East Fla. Papers, To the Captain-General,* 1811 June-1812 June. Quotation from letter of Dec. 13.

[58] Mathews to Monroe, Jan. 23, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* Evidently Monroe thought this request sufficiently important to be turned over to the Secretary of War.

like Crawford sympathized with the scheme. Troup had evidently been in consultation with Monroe over Florida affairs, and had, it would appear, found the Secretary harboring some misgivings about the propriety of Mathews's procedure. He now sent him an extract from McIntosh's letter and suggested that it furnished a way out.

"Since I left you," wrote Troup, "it has occurred to me a new aspect may be given to the subject of the letter received this morning. J. H. M[cIntosh], having long resided in the Province, and bound himself in the prescribed form of allegiance, may be considered a subject of the King of Spain,—if his Party be made up of Spanish subjects, as is by no means improbable,—at least, in great part, to a revolution of the Government by Spanish subjects, nothing can be objected. But will it be possible to keep out of sight the agency of * * * * * * * [Mathews]?"[59]

Troup's fear that Mathews's name could not be kept out of the affair was well grounded—better so, as will appear, than his expectation that the revolutionary party would consist largely of Spanish subjects.

Mathews, meanwhile, had approached Captain Campbell to ascertain what naval assistance could be expected, informing him that "circumstances justified the expectation of a speedy change in the political affairs of that country," and suggesting "the expediency of holding

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[59] Troup to Monroe, no date. Inclosing copy of extract from letter of McIntosh to Troup, dated St. Mary's, Mar. 12, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs.

the naval force on this station in readiness to act as occasion may require."[60] Campbell apparently promised Mathews his assistance; so it would appear from the following note which Mathews addressed to the naval officer on March 11:

"The business upon which we have conversed relative to East Florida being now ripe for execution, I have to request you to furnish fifty muskets and bayonets, fifty pistols, and an equal number of swords, for the whole of which I will, by my receipt, make myself accountable. You will also please permit Mr. McIntosh at this time to select out of the swords and pistols, such and as many as he may deem expedient giving receipts for them—the rest I will receive tomorrow or the next day. I shall hereafter have occasion to solicit your further cooperation agreeably to my Instructions."

Campbell forwarded a copy of this letter to Washington, with the comment that "The muskets were received by Lt. Appelen [Appling] of the Rifle Corps. Intended as General Mathews informed me for the rifle men at Point Petre in place of their rifles." Whether McIntosh received the swords and pistols he did not say.[61]

Unfortunately for Mathews's plans, Lieutenant Colonel Smith (he had been promoted to that grade) was at this time absent from the encampment at Point Petre, and when Mathews applied there for the military sup-

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[60] Campbell to Hamilton, Feb. 29, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. 1.

[61] Ibid.

port he deemed requisite, he found in command Major Jacint Laval, who had rather conservative ideas about the proper peace-time activities of an army. Mathews demanded of Laval that the latter allow a detachment of his force "to go on a secret expedition to East Florida." Laval at first refused, on the ground that he had no instructions which authorized such use of his men, but later, "on being harassed by him in St. Mary's," he promised a detachment of fifty men, "instead of 120 or 140 he wanted."[62]

Preparations now seemed about complete, and McIntosh, the chieftain of the "patriots," wrote to Congressman Troup the letter which was mentioned above.

"Before you can receive this," wrote McIntosh, "the Province of East Florida will have undergone a Revolution and probably [will be] in the quiet possession of the Officers of the Government of the U. States. Our plan is all arranged to take the Fort of St. Augustine and the Governor on Monday night next [March 18, 1812] by surprise, and in half an hour I set off to head a few chosen friends to execute this commission. The thing has been for some months in agitation between General Mathews and myself, but I am afraid never would have been accomplished had not the General been governed by the spirit of his Instructions and the declared wishes of his Country."[63]

The revolutionary army which was to take St. Au-

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[62] Laval to the War Dept., Mar. 16, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*, Old Files Section.

[63] McIntosh to Troup, Mar. 12, 1812. Note 59 above.

gustine and overthrow the Spanish government there was to consist of the "patriots" themselves, of a certain number of volunteers from the state of Georgia, and of fifty soldiers from the garrison at Point Petre. The soldiers were to go as volunteers, leaving behind their character as soldiers of the United States but not their government muskets! In their march across country to St. Augustine they would need naval support along the St. John's river. Mathews accordingly made another request of Campbell, to the effect that he would "direct two gun boats on this station up the River St. John's, one to proceed to the Cow Ford, the other lower down the River. In order to protect and defend that part of the Province."[64] But the gunboats could not, like the soldiers, go as volunteers, and in order to find a pretext for ordering them into Spanish waters, Mathews revived a rumor of the approach of British colored troops, which he had mentioned in the preceding June. In this he was assisted by a certain half-pay British officer, a Captain Wylly, who obligingly told McIntosh that he knew of the proposed black incursion. It was this circumstance, as Mathews explained, that justified him, under his instructions, in ordering the "preoccupancy" of the province by American forces.[65]

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[64] Mathews to Campbell, Mar. 14, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. 1.

[65] Mathews to Monroe, Mar. 14, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.,* Div. of Pubs. John Floyd to W. H. Crawford, Mar. 21, 1812. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 36. (State Dept. MSS.)

All these fine plans were now ruined by the behavior of Major Laval. That officer, as will be recalled, had promised Mathews that he would allow fifty of his men to join the expedition as "volunteers"; but, as he wrote the Secretary of War, "Things remained in that situation only a few hours in my mind; having an opportunity to discover that they were not to be employed as soldiers of the United States, I have refused to send any at all."[66] No further representations moved Laval from this decision.[67] He withstood the cajoling of McIntosh and the blustering of Mathews and subsequently ordered the latter out of camp, "in a manner,"

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[66] Laval to the War Dept., Mar. 16, 1812. Note 62 above.

[67] Mathews addressed to Laval on Mar. 13 three categorical enquiries as to the co-operation he was willing to afford, to which he requested an "immediate and unequivocal answer." Will you, he asked Laval, first, upon information that the local authorities of East Florida wish to cede a portion thereof to the United States, march with your command to take and hold it? Will you, second, upon information that East Florida is about to be occupied by a foreign power, use your troops to "preoccupy, possess and defend it for the United States"? Will you, third, "in conformity with your solemn pledge and engagement to Mr. McIntosh in the presence of Commander Campbell and myself, permit the fifty Volunteers to proceed and execute the Duty allotted to them in that engagement?" Thus, if Laval still refused to allow his soldiers to go as "volunteers" on the expedition against St. Augustine, Mathews hoped to secure his aid through an invitation from the "patriots" as the local authorities, or through employing the rumor of the approach of a regiment of British colored troops. Mathews to Laval, Mar. 13, 1812; Mathews to Monroe, Mar. 14, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs. Laval to Mathews, Mar. 14, 1812. *Misc. Letters*, Vol. 36 (State Dept. MSS.)

as Mathews complained, "marked with rudeness and ungentlemanlike behavior."[68]

Laval's refusal to cooperate was fatal to the plan for surprising St. Augustine. Campbell, in forwarding to his superior a copy of Mathews's request for gunboats on the St. John's river, reported that he had refused "to act on this part of the General's instructions as the military were not to cooperate." "I have little reason to doubt," wrote Mathews, "had Major Laval not defeated by first plan, by refusing me aid, I would, by this time, [have] been able to have informed you of the cession of the whole of East Florida to the United States."[69]

Unable to carry out the attack on St. Augustine, Mathews and his associates resolved upon a less spectacular campaign, which should begin with the capture of Fernandina and Amelia island. For this purpose the "patriot" leaders assembled their forces at Rose's bluff on the south side of the St. Mary's river and here on March 14 unfurled the patriot flag of East Florida. The flag, according to an eye-witness, "was a white field with a figure of a soldier in blue charging bayonet, with the motto *'salus populi, lex suprema'*, but, after the flag and its legend had become the subject of some merriment, it was altered to read *'vox populi lex suprema.'* "[70]

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[68] Mathews to Monroe, Mar. 21, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs.

[69] Campbell to Hamilton, Mar. 14, 1812. *Captains' Letters*, 1812, Vol. 1. Mathews to Monroe, Mar. 21, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs.

[70] *Senate Misc. Doc.* No. 55, 1 sess., 36 Cong., p. 17.

Descriptions of the force which assembled at Rose's bluff vary in respect to the exact number present, but agree substantially as to its character. Testimony as to the aggregate strength places the number at from 180 to 350—a discrepancy doubtless to be explained in part by actual variations from day to day. But all agree that there were not above a few dozens of Spanish subjects and that the majority were citizens of the United States.[71]

Having organized themselves as the "local authorities" of Rose's bluff, the revolutionists, in accordance with the prearranged plan, invited the United States to assume charge of their territory, and Mathews, to whom of course the invitation was tendered, made a last effort to secure aid from Major Laval. The local authorities of East Florida, he informed Laval, wished to surrender "that portion of the Province called Rose's Bluff" to the United States; therefore, by virtue of his powers as commissioner, he called upon Laval "to

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[71] Major Laval reported that there were not above eight or ten Spanish subjects. Laval to the War Dept., Mar. 16, 1812. Note 62 above. The Charleston *Courier* (Apr. 20, 1812) published a letter from a gentleman at Amelia island declaring that "of the 200 men said to compose the Rebel party which landed here, there were only about *fifty naturalized subjects* of H. C. Majesty; the remainder were citizens of the United States—and it is worthy of remark, in this *Spanish* revolution, that not one *Spaniard* is engaged in it to the present hour." General Floyd of Georgia wrote Senator Crawford that the revolution was organized on the Georgia side and "supported by a majority of Volunteer Militia from this State." Floyd to Crawford, Mar. 21, 1812. *Misc. Letters*, Vol. 36. (State Dept. MSS.)

march a detachment of fifty men to take peaceable possession of Rose's Bluff tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock for the United States and to hold and defend it for them."[72] Unable to prevail upon Laval, Mathews and his friends, it appears, undertook to enlist his men without his consent, and a state almost of anarchy reigned in the encampment. Laval wrote his report to the War Department "at 2 o'clock in the morning, after sitting up to watch my men from being swindled away." "The camp is in confusion," he declared. "I am informed of projects to embark my men by force, and also of the poignard [sic] of the revolutionists being extended over me."[73]

On March 15 the patriot camp was moved from Rose's bluff to Lower bluff, two miles down stream and seven miles from Fernandina. Mathews now requested Captain Campbell to make such disposition of his gunboats as would enable them to cooperate with "the party authorized and acting under the local authorities of East Florida,"—a request with which Campbell obligingly complied.[74] Next day the revolutionists sent to Justo Lopez, the Spanish commandant at Fernandina, their summons to surrender, together with the proposed terms of capitulation. Of these, the most important article stipulated that within twenty-four hours

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[72] Mathews to Laval, Mar. 14, 1812. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 36. (State Dept. MSS.)

[73] See note 62 above.

[74] Mathews to Campbell, Mar. 15, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. 1.

the town should be ceded to the United States, but that it should, until May 1, 1813, be treated as a free port, open to the commerce of all nations, even should the United States and Great Britain go to war. Other provisions guaranteed property rights and secured to the settlers until May 1, 1813, the free and exclusive privilege of cutting timber as under the existing regime.[75]

Several of the American gunboats now took up threatening positions where they could blockade the harbor and command with their guns the feeble shore defenses. Lopez hereupon addressed letters to Laval and Campbell, inquiring whether the revolutionists were supported by the United States. Laval replied at once: "I have the greatest satisfaction in informing you that the United States are neither principals nor auxiliaries, and that I am not authorized to make any attack upon East Florida."[76] Campbell, on the other hand, while he made an ineffectual attempt to avoid "committing" his government, made it plain that it was his purpose to cooperate with the revolutionists. He naively stated that the American naval force was "not intended to act in the name of the United States, but to aid in support of a large proportion of your countrymen in arms who have thought proper to declare themselves independent, and who are now in the act of calling on you to join in their undertaking."[77]

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[75] Lodowick Ashley to Justo Lopez, Mar. 16, 1812. (Certified translation.) *Senate Misc. Doc.* No. 55, 1 sess., 36 Cong., p. 67.
[76] Laval to Lopez, Mar. 16, 1812, Ibid., p. 72.
[77] Campbell to Lopez, Mar. 17, 1812. *East Florida Invasion,* p. 21.

Lopez now sent envoys to the insurgent camp at Lower bluff and to Mathews on the American side. To the insurgent leaders the messengers communicated the refusal of Lopez to surrender or enter into a treaty with them, but told them, as they reported to Lopez next day, "that if General Mathews wished to treat on the part of the United States, that you [Lopez] could then treat with him with honor." The other messengers, in the course of a stormy interview with Mathews, offered to surrender to him if the naval forces would fire a gun upon Amelia, but declared that they would "never surrender to those whom we can repel." Mathews was of course unwilling to "commit" his government by accepting the surrender from Lopez. He must receive the territory peaceably, at the invitation of friendly "local authorities."[78]

Lopez meanwhile had mustered the militia, some fifty or sixty in number, and with his scanty force attempted to man the defenses of the town. But Captain Campbell's reply to the enquiry of the commandant "tended not a little to damp the ardor of our spirits and many began to think the cause desperate."[79] This impression was deepened when five of the American gunboats appeared "in battle array opposite the Town of Fernandina, moored with springs on their cables

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[78] Hibberson and Arredondo to Lopez, Mar. 17, 1812. Younge and Atkinson to Lopez, Mar. 17, 1812. *Senate Misc. Doc.* No. 55, 1 sess., 36 Cong., pp. 74, 76.

[79] Statement of Henry Younge, dated St. Augustine, Mar. 22, 1812. *East Florida Papers, Various Subjects.*

and guns pointed directly at the Town and everything ready for action." A militia officer named Hibberson made an effort to fire on the gunboats, but was prevented by his companions, who were not anxious to bring on a conflict. Lopez made a last effort to surrender his post to the superior force of the United States. The Spanish flag was hauled down and sent out to one of the gunboats. The Americans refused to receive it "or to hold any communication with them that brought it. It was then taken back to the city and hoisted again."

Presently the "patriots" appeared—according to Clarke, at a signal from the gunboats—coming down in a number of flat-bottomed boats through Bell's river. The Spanish appealed to the naval force to remain neutral, but received the reply: "If you fire on them we will fire on you." "All the while," said Clarke, "the cannon of the gunboats (carrying three apiece) were pointed in the faces of the people, and the matches were lighted for the purpose of discharging them." The commander of the gunboats, Campbell stated later, had orders "not to fire a shot unless first fired upon, and previous to the approach of the patriots I gave a positive order not to fire a shot on any pretext whatever."[80]

The threat of force was quite sufficient. In the face of the belligerent attitude of the gunboats and the

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[80] Campbell to Hamilton, Mar. 21, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. 1.

threat of the insurgents that in case of resistance no quarter would be given, only eight or ten of the Spanish militia signified their willingness to fight. Winslow Foster, commanding one of the gunboats, observed that "after some communications had taken place between the Spanish authorities and the patriots, the flag of the town was again lowered, and a white flag went up, the device of which was a man charging bayonet, and the motto, 'vox populi suprema lex.' "[81]

On the following day—March 18, 1812—Mathews came over from St. Mary's and, in the name of the United States, accepted the cession of Amelia island from the "local authorities." Lieutenant Colonel Smith had returned to his command on the 17th, "in time enough," wrote General Floyd, "to save the small garrison from impending ruin for want of subordination." Between him and Mathews there existed a perfect understanding. Major Laval was placed under arrest, and on the 18th Smith reported to the Secretary of War: "In obedience to my instructions of the 26th Jan'y. 1811, I have sent a detachment of fifty men to

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[81] Besides Campbell's official letter of Mar. 21, which is meagre in detail, there are four accounts of this episode. One is the statement of Henry Younge cited above. A second is a letter from G. J. F. Clarke to Juan O'Reilly at St. Augustine, dated Fernandina, Mar. 19, 1812. *East Fla. Papers, Various Subjects,* 1808-1812 July. The same Clarke and Winslow Foster, sailing-master commanding gunboat No. 62 in Campbell's flotilla, later stated their recollections of the affair in the case of *Pons vs. U.S.* Their testimony is printed in *Senate Misc. Doc.* No. 55, 1 sess., 36 Cong., pp. 17, 25 See also Niles' *Register,* II, 93.

receive and defend in the name of the United States, the town of St. Fernandina and the island of Amelia."[82]

The vagueness of their orders gave concern to both Smith and Campbell. Both officers, in their official letters, asked for more specific instructions, and Campbell expressed misgivings over the part he had played and begged to be at once informed whether his conduct was approved. Mathews himself recognized the inadequacy of the officers' orders and wrote to Monroe that he hoped these "omissions" might be corrected.[83]

Notwithstanding the lack of specific orders, both Campbell and Smith continued to cooperate with Mathews. The patriots were to advance toward St. Augustine, assuming control of the country as they went and at once turning it over to the United States. Smith's detachment would follow, occupying the posts successively as they were turned over to General Mathews. Thus Smith would keep within his orders, which authorized him to take over and defend such posts as might have been surrendered to the United States by the local authorities.[84] Smith and his detachment accordingly embarked April 1 for Picolata on the St. John's river, at a point nearly opposite St. Augustine.

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[82] Floyd to Crawford, Mar. 21, 1812. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 36, (State Dept. MSS.) Smith to Eustis, Mar. 18, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*

[83] Smith to Eustis, Mar. 18, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* Campbell to Hamilton, Mar. 21, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. 1. Mathews to Monroe, Mar. 21, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.,* Div. of Pubs.

[84] Smith to Eustis, Mar. 27, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*

For the capture of the Spanish capital Mathews considered naval aid essential. His letter of March 21 to Monroe closed with the plea: "Pray send on two or three armed vessels to lay off St. Augustine and the coast of Florida." A week later he wrote Monroe that he had "required the Commodore to order round the Vixen and two gunboats now in these waters to lay and cruise off the bar of St. Augustine to bring to, examine and detain all vessels bound in having troops or succours of any kind for the town or garrison."

On April 4 General Mathews departed for Picolata, leaving Campbell to paint a lively picture of his revolutionary enthusiasm. "It can scarce be credited," wrote Campbell, "by any man that had seen General Mathews previous to the commencement of the revolution that he could have changed his appearance and manners to what they have been since the 12th or 13th of March. From one of the most grave, silent, and prudent men I ever knew, he is now more gay and unreserved than any man of the station; he left Fernandina on the 4th inst. for Picolata, observing to the people of Fernandina that he was on his way to St. Augustine; that having conquered, he would proceed to Pensacola and Mobile, revolutionize that country, and proceed to Mexico, and finally set himself down in Peru."[85]

Ten days later Lieutenant Colonel Smith reported to the Secretary of War from Moosa Old Fort, within

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[85] Campbell to Hamilton, Apr. 16, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. 1.

sight of St. Augustine. He and his detachment had ascended the St. John's river by boat to Picolata, which they had reached on the 7th. Next day they had ascended one of the eastern tributaries of the river, known as Six Mile creek, at the head of which they had left their "little stores under a sergeant's guard," and as Smith wrote, "proceeded to this place which was occupied by the Patriot forces; they delivered me peaceable possession on the 12th at 4 o'clock, at which time I hoisted the American flag." On the following morning a Spanish armed schooner had fired on the encampment but had inflicted no injury. "This post," the letter continued, "is within two and a half miles of St. Augustine and in full view. I think this situation a bad one for defense and will take a new position in a day or two. . . . From present appearances I have little doubt but ere this reaches you we shall have had an action. The Governor has sent to Havana and Nassau for reinforcements which it appears is daily expected. Should they arrive I shall be compelled to fall back but will oppose them at every defile until the Georgia volunteers can come to my aid."[86]

There was for the present little to fear from the Spanish. The Spanish force in the province was desperately weak. When Governor Kindelan arrived in June, he reported that the entire garrison of East Florida comprised "408 men of all nations, races, and colors, who upon being detailed to service all remain on

[86] Smith to Eustis, Apr. 14, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*

sentry duty in their respective stations"—that is, there were not enough men to furnish reliefs for the sentries; and he added that they were "for the most part a miserable city militia totally ignorant of the use of a rifle."[87] The Captain-General at Havana, to whom Estrada applied for reinforcements upon receipt of the first news of the crisis at Fernandina, was in no position to furnish substantial aid. In fact the only hope of assistance for the Spanish was in the Indians, especially the Alachua nation of the Seminoles. Estrada had at once sent messengers to their chiefs, "with the object of bringing them and their warriors to our assistance, as they have promised."[88] Even this hope was for the moment cut off. Some of the Indians, on their way to St. Augustine, found the insurgents already in possession of the crossing of the St. John's at Picolata and turned back discouraged. Mathews, too, held a talk with the chiefs in which he warned them against any participation in the war. Estrada even feared that they might take the side of the insurgents.[89]

After making a formal demand for the surrender of the town and citadel of St. Augustine[90]—a demand that met with no response—the insurgents, supported by the

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[87] Kindelan to Apodaca, June 16, 1812. *East Fla. Papers, Secret Correspondence to and from the Captain-General,* 1783-1813.

[88] Estrada to Someruelos, Mar. 17, 1812. *East Fla. Papers, To the Captain-General,* 1811 June-1812 June.

[89] Estrada to Someruelos, Mar. 26, 1812. Ibid.

[90] McIntosh and Delany (et al.) to the Governor of St. Augustine, Mar. 26, 1812. *East Fla. Papers, Papers of the Revolution in East Florida.*

United States troops under Smith, attempted to reduce the place by means of a siege, cutting off the approaches on the land side and looking anxiously for a naval force to blockade the entrance to the harbor. A few weeks' reflection had deepened Campbell's misgivings over the course he had pursued. Referring to his part in the affair at Fernandina as a circumstance "that cannot without pain be ever repeated by me," he confessed to Secretary Hamilton: "To find myself thus unofficer-like situated before the town of Fernandina by General Mathews, will be to me a source of regret and solemn consideration."[91] He had however complied in part with Mathews's request for naval aid by sending the *Vixen* to the vicinity of St. Augustine, not to blockade the place as Mathews had requested, but merely as "a vessel of observation," and by sending two gunboats to explore the entrance to the harbor and the feasibility of cooperating from that side with Lieutenant Colonel Smith; and despite an unfavorable report from the midshipman sent on this expedition, he finally resolved, because of "the repeated importunities of General Mathews," to send several boats to gain possession of North river near St. Augustine and to act under General Mathews's orders.[92]

Meanwhile, the patriots, assuming the functions of

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[91] Campbell to Hamilton, Apr. 16, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. 1.

[92] Mathews to Campbell, Mar. 29, 1812, and Campbell's marginal comment thereon. Campbell to Hamilton, Apr. 24, 25, 1812. Ibid.

government for the entire province and choosing as president William Craig, a former magistrate under the Spanish government and "a man of property and influence," issued a treason proclamation threatening death to any person or persons in the territory who should aid or correspond with the governor or inhabitants of St. Augustine, "encouraging resistance or opposition to the local or constituted Authority of said Territory."[93]

A further and more important act of sovereignty was the cession to the United States of the entire province of East Florida, upon terms a tentative draft of which Mathews had forwarded to Monroe March 21. The terms promised territorial rights under the United States and eventual admission to statehood, safeguarded the titles to lands, including the bounties pledged to "volunteers," and repeated the provision that Fernandina was to retain for a year the privileges of a free port. Mathews was careful, furthermore, to make provision for the acquisition of further Spanish territory—the town of Mobile and the region between the Apalachicola and the Perdido being as yet in Spanish possession. The fifth article of the draft provided that the United States should undertake the reduction of Mobile and Pensacola, "unless in their wisdom it shall be deemed injurious to the province or the U. States." Finally, it was stipulated that should Spain recover her

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[93] Mathews to Monroe, Mar. 28, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs. Charleston *Courier*, Apr. 29, 1812.

independent station, and a majority of the people of East Florida wish to return to their Spanish allegiance, they might under certain conditions do so.[94]

From his headquarters at Moosa Old Fort Mathews now wrote to President Madison a report glowing with self-satisfaction.

"The commission with which I am trusted," he wrote, "is now I flatter myself, fast approaching to a close & I fondly hope in such a manner as will be satisfactory to you & honorable & advantageous to our common country, the constituted authorities of E. Florida having ceded to the U. States through their Commissioner all the late Province. . . . It is impossible to convey an adequate idea of the various embarrassments I had to encounter, the most trying and arduous proceeded from Major Lavals refusing to obey my requisitions after having pledged himself to do so, & also to support the persons engaged in the revolution. . . . In consequence of Major Lavals withdrawing his support the tract for bounties is much larger than was at first contemplated, the plan being chang[d]—large bounties were given to adventurers that came to the support of the people—but still there will remain a large and valuable country at the disposal of the U. States with live oak, cedar & pine sufficient to build all the navy the nation may ever want, with the important bay & harbor of Spiritus Santo or Tempe [Tampa] bay lying oppo-

[94] Mathews to Monroe, Mar. 21, 1812, enclosing draft of proposed terms of cession. *Misc. Letters*, Vol. 36. (State Dept. MSS.)

site the Havannah." Mathews commended the services of Lieutenant Colonel Smith and his officers and soldiers, who had given him "every support in their power," called attention to the need of two companies of artillery and one of infantry, as well as an engineer to superintend the new fortifications that would be necessary, advised the early erection of a territorial government, and enclosed a list of persons who he thought should be rewarded with offices.

But the most astonishing passage of Mathews's report was the assertion that "I have not in any instance committed the honor of government or my own reputation, by any act—nor have I pursued any clandestine means to accomplish the objects of my mission with any subject of E. Florida. The applications were made to me to know on what terms the Government would receive them, to which I gave such replys as were justified by my instructions, & in every instance I confer'd with men whose rank in society was respectable."[95] In view of the silence of the administration after his intentions and the general nature of his schemes had been made known, Mathews might with some justice expect approval of his acts. But how could he assert that he had not "pursued any clandestine means" or dream that he had not involved the government in the affair?

We have seen that the administration, by its silence for many months, had lent tacit approval to Mathews's

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[95] Mathews to Madison, Apr. 16, 1812. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 44.

plans. That up to the very end of March it still expected to countenance the "revolution" in East Florida is indicated by the fact that on March 28 (before the receipt of the news of the surrender of Fernandina) Captain Campbell was relieved of command in Charleston and Wilmington and told to give all his attention to affairs on the St. Mary's river. "It is peculiarly important," wrote Secretary Hamilton, "to have an officer of great skill and experience at St. Mary's, because it will most probably be a scene of active operations."[96]

But however ready the government had been to countenance secret machinations to bring about the occupation of East Florida, it had not been prepared for so open and flagrant a use of its armed forces against a friendly power. Furthermore, the publication just at this time of the Henry correspondence, and the accompanying denunciation of Great Britain's supposed attempt to intrigue with citizens of the United States, made it particularly inconvenient for the President and the Secretary of State to be caught supporting an intrigue of similar nature in the Spanish possessions. Senator Crawford later declared it to be a very general opinion in his part of the country that the Henry exposure was the sole reason for the failure to support Mathews.[97] The embarrassment of the government was evident. "In East Florida," wrote Madison to Jef-

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[96] *Letters to Officers, Ships of War*, X, 2. (Navy Dept. MSS.)

[97] Crawford to Monroe, Aug. 6, 1812. *Monroe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 13. Ralph Isaacs, Mathews's secretary and right hand man, stated later that Monroe had instructed him to tell

ferson, "Mathews has been playing a tragi-comedy in the face of common sense, as well as of his instructions. His extravagances place us in the most distressing dilemma."[98]

The Democratic press, it is true, generally looked upon the affair as commendable.[99] But the Federalist papers enjoyed this evidence of Republican perfidy with as much zest as good Republicans had shown over the Henry revelations, denouncing it as "a Plot more atrocious than Henry's," and inquiring "why, or upon what

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Mathews that "the disavowal grew out of certain existing circumstances—such circumstances that government was so situated in relation to, that at present they could not vindicate his conduct." Isaacs to Monroe, July 3, 1814. *Misc. Letters*, Vol. 44. (State Dept. MSS.) It seems most probable that the "existing circumstances" were the Henry letters.

[98] Madison to Jefferson, Apr. 24, 1812. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 7.

[99] The Essex *Register* of Salem, Mass. (Apr. 12, 1812) reported that "by the last accounts from East Florida, the spirit of revolution was preparing to deliver that portion of our northern continent to our states, with which its interest was believed to be nearly allied..."; and the *New Hampshire Patriot* (Apr. 14, 1812) rejoiced to hear that "this depot of smugglers and British goods [Fernandina] has been taken possession of by 800 troops of the State of Georgia; and that the whole of East Florida was about raising the standard of the United States in place of that of Spain and England." The Lexington (Ky.) *Reporter* (Apr. 14, 1812) hailed the seizure of Amelia island as "an earnest of energy," and the *Kentucky Gazette* (Apr. 28, 1812) refused to believe a report in the Federalist papers that the President had disapproved the occupation.

A more cautious paper, and one closer to the administration, the Richmond *Enquirer* (May 1, 1812) sought to exonerate the government rather than to justify Mathews' proceedings.

authority, this extraordinary proceeding has taken place."[100]

While the Federalist editors were denouncing the government for its complicity in the affair, Monroe was quietly doing what he could to extricate himself and the President from their difficulties. His position was humiliating in the extreme—toward the foreign government which his agent had grossly affronted, and toward the agent whom his own silence or covert approval had misled. Through the British minister, upon strong representations from the latter,[101] he communicated a disavowal of Mathews's acts to De Onis, the unrecog-

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[100] The Charleston *Courier* (Mar. 27, 28, 1812) was willing to "leave it to our Democratic brethren, who have inveighed with so much feeling and effect upon the attack on Copenhagen, to furnish a justification for the part which the Americans have taken in this transaction," and thought that "the friends of American honor must blush at this unprecedented conduct of our officers." The New York *Evening Post* (Apr. 8, 1812) declared: "After the hand our government have taken in this ungenerous and dastardly business, we hope they will be silent about Gov. Craig or Copenhagen. The latter business, compared with this, will appear to be an honorable and praiseworthy affair." The Baltimore *Federal Republican* (quoted in N. Y. *Evening Post*, Apr. 8, 1812) spoke of "this unprovoked and unjustifiable attack of the possessions of a nation with whom we are at peace." The Boston *Gazette* (Apr. 30, 1812) chided Congress for not demanding of the executive "why, or upon what authority, this extraordinary proceeding has taken place," and the *American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia, Apr. 7, 1812) printed an account of the occupation under the caption, "A Plot more atrocious than Henry's."

[101] Foster to Monroe, Apr. 6, 1812. *Brit. Legation*, Vol. 7. (State Dept. MSS.)

nized representative of Spain.[102] As for Mathews, there was no course but to dismiss him from government employ in the kindest manner possible. "I am sorry to have to state," wrote Monroe, "that the measures which you appear to have adopted for obtaining possession of Amelia Island, and other parts of East Florida, are not authorized by the law of the United States, or the instructions founded on it, under which you have acted." Monroe then explained that force was to have been used only in case of an attempt to occupy the province by a third power; that, even if occupied by the United States, the province was to have been held subject to negotiation when Spain should once more have a settled government; and that as it was in the power of the United States to take possession whenever it should become necessary, "it would be the more to be regretted if possession should be effected by any means irregular in themselves, and subjecting the Government of the United States to unmerited censure."

This statement of principles, it may be observed, would have been more useful and have carried a stronger presumption of sincerity had it been laid before Mathews after his first report of his border activity. The Secretary closed with an expression of confidence in Mathews's integrity and zeal; to the latter quality he imputed "the error into which you have fallen." But, as Monroe explained, "in consideration

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[102] *British. For. Office, American,* II, 5/85. (British Archives.)

of the part which you have taken, which differs so essentially from that contemplated and authorized by the Government, and contradicts so entirely the principles on which it has uniformly and sincerely acted, you will be sensible of the necessity of discontinuing the service in which you have been employed." Mathews was then informed that his powers were therewith transferred to the Governor of Georgia.[103]

In a private letter of the same date Monroe expressed his pain at the necessity of disagreeing with Mathews, and his confidence in the latter's patriotism, integrity, and zeal, but called his attention to a law of 1794, which, as he observed, "forbids such procedure under severe penalties.[104] "I have thought it improper to mention this fact in an official letter to you," Monroe added, "but it is one which had its weight in the part which the govt. had taken."[105]

Under different circumstances Mathews might have smiled as he read Monroe's righteous phrases. Pre-

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[103] Monroe to Mathews, Apr. 4, 1812. *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.*, III, 572.

[104] The act referred to was one of June 5, 1794 (*U. S. Statutes at Large*, I, 384). For such offenses against the neutrality laws as Mathews had committed it prescribed penalties of fine and imprisonment not to exceed $3000 and three years respectively. The thought suggests itself that the reference to this law might possibly have been meant as a threat to keep Mathews quiet. Mathews, however, did not so regard it; he thanked Monroe for his personal letter.

[105] Draft of this letter, dated Washington, Apr. 4, 1812, unaddressed and unsigned, is in the State Dept., Division of Publications.

sumably he was at this time in no smiling mood. "Poor old Mathews," wrote Crawford, "I am fearful will die of mortification & resentment when he is made sensible of the utmost extent of his disappointment."[106] Mathews undertook no measures to justify himself, though he wrote to Monroe in June: "If I thought myself justifiable in exposing to public view confidential instructions and conversations, I have no doubt I could justify my conduct to an impartial public, and make it very evident that I have not, in any instance, exceeded my powers." His interest in the good of his country, he said, together with his unwillingness to embarrass Madison in the approaching election, forbade his making any such exposure. He added that while he should wish to be of service to his country in the struggle with Great Britain, it was obvious that a tender of his services now would be useless, and he therefore chose to offer them to the people of East Florida.[107] In July or early August he was with Crawford in Lexington, Georgia. "The Genl. believes," wrote Crawford, "that the disavowal of his arrangement was entirely the re-

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[106] Crawford to Monroe, Apr. 19, 1812. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 36. (State Dept. MSS.)

[107] Mathews to Monroe, June 22, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.,* Div. of Pubs. Isaacs claimed to have been partly instrumental in preventing Mathews from publishing "much of what is call'd 'back stairs' instruction & approbation—the letters advising your [Monroe's] Depart. of all his proceedings," etc., but he added that "the Genls. patriotism cooperated with my exertions." Isaacs to Monroe, July 3, 1814. *Misc. Let.,* Vol. 44, State Dept.

sult of Henry's discovery, and he is not very singular in that opinion in this country, so far as I have been able to collect public opinion."[108] Mathews's resolve to keep silence weakened. He started for Washington, where, he was said to have remarked, he'd "be dam'd if he did not blow them all up." But he never reached the capital. Worn out by arduous if not meritorious service to his country, and crushed with disappointment, he died about September 1, 1812, at Augusta.[109]

Six days after dismissing Mathews, Monroe addressed to Governor D. B. Mitchell of Georgia a formal request to assume control of affairs in East Florida, and to open negotiations with the Spanish governor for "a restoration of that state of things in the province, which existed before the late transactions." "It is presumed," said Monroe, "that the arrangement will be easily and amicably made between you." So far so good, but Monroe now added a condition which, intentionally or not, was almost certain to prove an obstacle to any arrangement with the Spanish governor. Inasmuch as the insurgents in East Florida, wrote Monroe, had presumably been led to put much reliance in the countenance and support of the United States, it would be improper for the United States government to abandon them to the resentment of the Spanish authorities. Mitchell was therefore directed to obtain from the

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[108] Above, note 97.

[109] Hazen Kimball to T. Pickering. *Pickering Papers, MSS.*, XXX, 145. Crawford to Monroe, Sept. 9, 1812. *Monroe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 13.

Spanish governor "the most explicit and satisfying assurance" that they would not be harmed.[110]

If Monroe wished to provide a pretext for continuing the occupation,[111] this provision, with its appearance of simple justice to the "patriots" was well designed for that purpose. Equally well chosen for the same purpose was the new Agent, Governor Mitchell. Probably there were not a handful of Georgians who did not look upon East Florida as the legitimate inheritance of the United States, and Mitchell fully represented the opinion of his state. Mathews, as we have seen, had been in conference with Crawford over his plans, and they had been known to Troup. Volunteers from Georgia had formed a large part of the "patriot" army and received promise of the generous land bounties mentioned by Mathews in his report to the President. The opening of hostilities had excited lively interest in the state. The militia of southern Georgia was at once mobilized under orders from General Floyd.[112] Floyd in a letter to Crawford explained the mobilization as a safeguard against attack from the Florida Indians, whom it was known the Spanish had

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[110] Monroe to Mitchell, Apr. 10, 1812. *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.*, III, 572.

[111] To the French minister Monroe stated that Mathews had plainly gone beyond his instructions; but he added "that nevertheless, now that things had reached their present condition, there would be more danger in retreating than advancing; and so, while disavowing the General's too precipitate conduct, they would maintain the occupation." Serurier to Maret, May 4, 1812. Adams, *United States*, VI, 241.

[112] *The Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger*, Apr. 2, 1812.

summoned to their aid, adding that, "should they take up the cudgels it will afford a desireable pretext for the Georgians to penetrate their country, and Break up a Negroe Town: an important Evil growing under their patronage." Floyd urged upon Crawford the importance of possessing East Florida, but deplored the means which were being employed, which, while they implicated the government, were in themselves ineffectual, and deprived the army of the honor of war. "Altho I am not inclined to advocate the direction of our arms to Conquest on General principles," Floyd concluded, "Yet Interest and I may almost say imperious Necessity Pleads, in the present Case, an Exception to the rule."[113]

Georgia sentiment was probably well summarized by the Augusta *Chronicle,* presumably in an issue of early May, which urged that at the very least it was imperative to retain Florida as a measure of safety until the country reached a state of assured peace with Great Britain.[114]

Governor Mitchell was thoroughly alive to the interest of his state in the fate of Florida. Before receiving his commission from Monroe, he had written the Secretary of War, warning him of the danger to Georgia latent in the East Florida situation, urging that the government adopt a "prompt and decisive course," and

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[113] Floyd to Crawford, Mar. 26, 1812. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 36. (State Dept. MSS.)

[114] Copied in Philadelphia *Aurora,* June 1, 1812.

promising the zealous cooperation of Georgia in any active measures which might be undertaken.[115]

Upon receiving his appointment from the Secretary of State, Mitchell requested more explicit instructions as to his course in certain contingencies. In reply Monroe gave him additional instructions which made it perfectly plain that the troops of the United States were not for the present to be withdrawn from East Florida.

Mitchell was informed, in the first place, that "by the law, of which a copy was forwarded to you, it is made the duty of the president to prevent the occupation of East Florida, by any foreign power. It follows that you are authorized to consider the entrance, or attempt to enter, especially under existing circumstances, of British troops of any description, as the case contemplated by law, and to use the proper means to defeat it. . . .

"It is not expected, if you find it proper to withdraw the troops, that you should interfere to compel the patriots to surrender the country, or any part of it, to the Spanish authorities. The United States are responsible for their own conduct only, not for that of the inhabitants of East Florida. Indeed, in consequence of the compromitment, of the United States to the inhabitants, you have already been instructed not to withdraw the troops, unless you find that it may be done consistently with their safety, and to report to the government the result of your conferences with the Spanish author-

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[115] Mitchell to Eustis, Apr. 20, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*

ities, with your opinion of their views, holding in the meantime the ground occupied.

"In the present state of our affairs with Great Britain, the course above pointed out is the more justifiable and proper."[116]

Mitchell was thus to continue the occupation if he saw any danger of the landing of British troops in Florida. He was to continue the occupation unless he could secure assurances of safety for a band of revolutionists and filibusters whom he was forbidden to remove from power. And if no British troops appeared, and the Spanish showed signs of yielding to his impossible conditions, he was to report fully to his government, "holding in the meantime the ground occupied." Governor Mitchell, as will appear hereafter, was well adapted to carry out the spirit of these instructions. Mathews had been repudiated, but the substance of his work remained.

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[116] Mitchell to Monroe, May 2, 1812. *State Dept. MSS., Div.* of Pubs. Monroe to Mitchell, May 27, 1812. *Am. State Papers, For. Rel.,* III, 573. Isaacs, who had brought to Washington the papers of the "cession," and who returned with messages from Monroe to Mathews, afterward reminded Monroe that, to use Isaac's words, "when you had finish'd your instructions to Gov'r. Mitchell after reading the *'sine qua non'* that render'd the restoration of the Province utterly impracticable, you said to me Gov'r. Mitchell will understand this wont he? to which I replied—he is not dull of comprehension Sir—Nor can you forget that at every interview I was assur'd that government were concerting (to use yr own words) measures to keep the Province & save harmless the Patriots." Isaacs to Monroe, July 3, 1814. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 44. (State Dept. MSS.)

III

If the frontiersman of the Northwest demanded war with Great Britain as indispensable, his kinsman of the southern border at least saw in it a means of fulfilling his expansionist dreams. The past two years had done much to give him what he thought his territorial rights, but much remained to be gained. The Spanish still held Mobile and Pensacola, St. Mark's and St. Augustine, and the American troops that held the country between the St. John's and the St. Mary's rivers were, it was supposed, about to be withdrawn.

The demand for the annexation of all Florida was more insistent than ever. Georgians like Floyd, Mitchell, Troup, and Crawford—the last two influential members of the war party in Congress—held the acquisition of East Florida essential to the prosperity, to the very safety, of their state. The Augusta *Chronicle,* cited on a previous page, hoped for "some new measures for the purpose of placing the whole of that colony under the control of the United States." Out in Mississippi Territory, the news of the occupation of East Florida aroused a lively hope of similar action farther west. "There is no doubt," wrote a recent settler at St. Stephens, to a friend in the East, "but Mobille and Pensacola will share the same fate in a few weeks, which no doubt will occation considerable action in this quarter during this summer, and all the citizens in this part of the country are much gratified at the Idea of the United States getting Possession of this Southern

Coast, as it is certainly of all importance to the citizens of this country."[117] The Nashville *Clarion,* quoting at length from the Congressional Report of 1803 on the navigation of the southern rivers, and explaining in detail how Tennessee's transportation difficulties would be solved by the opening of the Alabama and Tombigbee, declared that "No part of the union can be so much interested in the acquisition of West Florida as the State of Tennessee. . . . The Floridas will soon be occupied by American troops."[118]

But if the whole southern border was eager to take what remained of Florida, war with England seemed to afford a perfectly clear occasion for doing so. Spain was England's ally in the European war, and it was safe to assume that Spanish harbors in America would be open to British fleets and armies. As a simple measure of self-defense, the occupation of Florida seemed to many indispensable, and it was commonly assumed at the South that war with England meant war with Spain, or at least the forcible occupation of all Florida.

The notion of a war at once against England and Spain had been broached by Jefferson in 1807, in which case, he declared, "our southern defensive force can take the Floridas."[119] Mathews had alluded to a similar connection when he instructed the "discontents" of East Florida "not to expect that prompt and efficient

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[117] James Bradberry to A. D. Murphy, St. Stephens, M. T., Apr. 21, 1812. *Papers of Archibald D. Murphy,* I, 58.
[118] Copied in Niles' *Register,* III, 52-53, Sept. 26, 1812.
[119] *Writings of Thomas Jefferson,* V, 164.

aid from the United States, if our negotiation with the British Minister terminates auspiciously for us, that they might in the other event expect."[120] Expansionists like Clay and Harper, when they hurled defiance at Great Britain, had spoken in one breath of the nation's prospective conquests on the St. Lawrence and the Gulf of Mexico. Grundy of Tennessee, in the war debate in December, 1811, stated that he felt anxious "not only to add the Floridas to the South, but the Canadas to the North of this empire."[121] and he wrote to Jackson that in case of war "the Canadas & Floridas will be the Theatres of our offensive operations."[122]

Jackson himself, when shortly after the declaration of war he called upon his division of Tennessee militia to be in readiness, assured them that it was in West Florida that their arms should find employment.[123] Jefferson, writing of the mustering of the militia in his Virginia county in June, 1812, said that "the only inquiry they make is whether they are to go to Canada or Florida."[124]

In Georgia it was generally assumed that war with Great Britain would mean the certain seizure of all of Florida that remained unoccupied. "Had we no other claim on Florida or Spain," said the Augusta *Chronicle*

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[120] Above, p. 83.
[121] *Annals of Congress,* 12 Cong., I, 427.
[122] Grundy to Jackson, Dec. 24, 1811. *Jackson Papers, MSS.,* Vol. 9.
[123] Bassett, *Andrew Jackson,* I, 79.
[124] Jefferson to Madison, June 6, 1812. *Writings of Thomas Jefferson,* VI, 58.

in May, "sound policy would dictate the propriety as well as necessity of retaining possession of it till the close of the war we are now on the eve of commencing with an ally of that country."[125] On the day preceding the declaration of war, the Republican citizens of Milledgeville passed resolutions approving the war measures against Great Britain, and declaring their belief that with war in prospect the occupancy of East Florida was "essential to the interests of the country and the safety of our southern frontier."[126] A letter from Milledgeville dated July 8, 1812, reported that Governor Mitchell, who was at St. Mary's, had received news of the declaration of war, and, "considering that the Spaniards and British are in alliance both offensive and defensive, and that the vital interests of this state and the honor of the United States are implicated and will be hazarded by suffering the occupancy of East Florida by the banditti now in possession"—not the "patriots" evidently, to whom the term might have been applied, but the Spanish governor and his negro and Indian auxiliaries—"he will be detained until the reinforcements he has sent for and which are now assembling on the Oconee River, are received."[127] Mitchell himself explained later to the Georgia legislature the light in which, prior to the declaration of war, he had viewed the situation. "The confidence with which I anticipated the declaration of war against Great Britain," said the

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[125] Above, note 114.
[126] *Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger,* June 25, 1812.
[127] *National Intelligencer,* July 21, 1812.

governor, "led me with equal confidence to anticipate an enlargement of the powers of the President, by congress, as the necessary consequence, having for its object the entire occupancy of East and West Florida."[128]

War with Great Britain, then, meant, to the average Southerner, war also with Spain, and the completion of the annexation of the Floridas. To the people of the Southwest it meant the possibility of even greater things. The old dream of revolutionizing Mexico and, if not actually annexing it to the United States, at least profiting by its agricultural, mineral, and commercial wealth, revived with new vigor. The Southwest tried to persuade itself that the Federal government favored such plans, quoting cryptic passages from "prints known to be in the interest of the administration," and citing the promotion of Colonel Pike, an avowed annexationist, and his position then in command of the troops on the border, as evidence that an invasion was contemplated.[129] A writer signing himself "Americus" contributed to the Nashville *Clarion* of April 28 a long article in which "Manifest Destiny" ran riot.

"The Canadas," wrote Americus, "freed from the chains of an European master, shall take the rank of an independent state; or, too weak for sovereignty, shall hover under the wings of the American eagle. . . . The Floridas will sink into the confederation of American states. . . . Whilst our eastern and southern brethren are purchasing renown in arms, and extending the

[128] Niles' *Register*, III, 193, Nov. 28, 1812.
[129] Nashville *Clarion*, Apr. 30, May 5, 1812.

limits of the republic, are we condemned to remain inactive . . . ? No, citizens of the West! a destiny still more splendid is reserved for you. Behold the empire of Mexico, a celestial region, whose valiant sons are now struggling for their liberties as we struggled for ours thirty years ago. . . . Here it is that the statesman shall see an accession of Territory sufficient to double the extent of the republic; where the merchant shall see commercial resources unrivalled in other countries; the farmer, a luxuriant soil and delicious climate, where the financier shall be dazzled with gold and silver mines; while the ardent and generous mind, in the idea of establishing a new republic . . . shall deliver himself up to an enthusiasm of glory. . . . Besides, where is it written in the book of fate that the American republic shall not stretch her limits from the capes of the Chesapeake to Nootka sound, from the isthmus of Panama to Hudson bay?"[130]

Thus while the Northwesterner expected to take Canada as a result of war with Great Britain, southern men generally expected to complete the seizure of Florida from Great Britain's ally, Spain, while the more ambitious expansionists of the Southwest dreamed of further aggressions upon the Spanish territories, which should end in making the United States co-extensive with the continent of North America.

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[130] Nashville *Clarion*, Apr. 28, 1812. Editorially the paper commended the article to its readers, and suggestively followed it up with a series of historical and descriptive articles about Mexico.

CHAPTER III

Sectional Politics

If we should locate on a map of the United States the homes of those men in Congress who were most outspoken for war and annexation, and plot from these points the line of maximum war and expansionist sentiment, we should find our line to be the circumference of a crescent with one end in New Hampshire and the other in Savannah, Georgia. Beginning with John A. Harper in the former state, we should pass westward through the home of Peter B. Porter, near Buffalo, New York, thence southwestward through the country of Clay and Johnson in Kentucky, Grundy and Campbell in Tennessee, down through the Abbeville section of South Carolina, the home of Calhoun, and finally to Savannah, in the district represented by George M. Troup. From end to end the crescent traversed frontier territory, bordering foreign soil, British or Spanish, or confronting dangerous Indian tribes among whom foreign influence was suspected and feared. And the men who came from these districts to Washington displayed many of the characteristic frontier traits. They had national patriotism, to the point sometimes of

chauvinism, resenting with a new bitterness their country's wrongs and scorning the pacific measures hitherto used to repel them. They had unlimited faith in their country's future, believing its destined limits to be no less than the eastern and western oceans, the Gulf of Mexico and the "regions of eternal frost." Hence they were for a war which should at the same time defend the country's rights and expand its boundaries; they would punish British insults with the sword, wresting Canada from Great Britain and the residue of the Floridas from her weak ally, Spain.

Nothing could better demonstrate the frontier character of the war spirit than to observe its progressive decline as we pass from the rim of the crescent to its center at the national capital. Expansionist enthusiasm declined even more rapidly. Thus Cheves and Lowndes of South Carolina, Charlestonians both, were good war men but felt little interest in expansion even at the south.[1] In New York, the two senators, Smith from Long Island, and German from a mid-state county, though both Republicans, voted frequently with the anti-war party; German eventually voted against the declaration of war. A step nearer to Washington we have, on the south, Stanford of North Carolina and Randolph of Virginia in the House and Giles of Virginia in the Senate; on the north, Samuel Smith of Maryland and Michael Leib of Pennsylvania, both in

[1] Both opposed the bill for the occupation of East Florida, June, 1812. See below, pp. 150-1. *Annals of Congress,* 12 Cong., Part II, p. 1684.

the Senate—a group of Republicans who perhaps did more than the Federalists to embarrass the government in its war measures. Randolph was on principle opposed to war with Great Britain and had only contempt for talk of annexing Canada. Stanford apparently took his views from Randolph. But the Senate clique composed of Giles, Samuel Smith and Leib formed a faction whose ruling principle, if we may believe Henry Adams, was their hatred of Gallatin, and whose course in Congress was shaped more with a view to embarrassing the Treasury than to serving the interests of their country. Leib and his friend, Duane, publisher of the Philadelphia *Aurora,* had quarrelled with Gallatin long before over the patronage; Smith, over the administration of the Navy Department by his brother, Robert Smith. The exact cause of Giles's hatred of Gallatin is not clear, but it was whispered that he resented Madison's failure to make him (Giles) Secretary of State or to send him on an important foreign mission. He was described as "deadly hostile to Mr. Monroe, and not much in *love* with Mr. Madison."[2]

These men, representing points far distant from the frontier, formed the nucleus of the anti-administration faction in the Senate. They were on occasion reinforced by Senators from nearer the border. German of New York had affiliations with the group, and his colleague Smith sometimes voted with them. Gilman

[2] John A. Harper to William Plumer, Mar. 15, 1812. *William Plumer Letters, MSS.,* 1809-1815, p. 221. Same to same, June 14, 1812. Ibid., p. 330.

of New Hampshire had covertly opposed Madison's election and could not be counted on to support the administration. Governor Plumer had no confidence in his Republicanism.[3] More surprising was the defection of two western senators, Worthington of Ohio and Pope of Kentucky. Worthington, as his diary shows, was little impressed by reports of British intrigues among the Indians; he deplored the horrors of war and saw its approach with grave misgivings. He had, moreover, changed his politics several times, and his allegiance to the Republican party was thought to be insecure.[4] Pope, singularly enough, had described himself four years before as a straight administration man, standing high both "on the score of talents and Republicanism," and had added that "except Breckenridge no man from the West ever had more popularity in Congress."[5] In 1810-1811 he had joined Henry Clay in leading the fight for the administration's plan to annex West Florida.[6] Then he had violated the instructions of the Kentucky legislature in supporting the recharter of the United States bank, for which he both voted and spoke, and as a result had been read out of the party by his constituents. He now generally worked

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[3] Harper to Plumer, Mar. 15, 1812. Ibid., p. 221. Plumer to Harper, Mar. 31, 1812. Ibid., p. 222.

[4] Worthington's *MS. Diary* in Library of Congress. Entries for Dec. 16, 1811, May 27 and June 14, 1812. War once declared, he was resolved to give the administration loyal support. See also Chillicothe *Independent Republican,* Sept. 27, 1810.

[5] Pope to Ninian Edwards, Jan. 9, 1808. *The Edwards Papers*: *Chicago Hist. Soc. Collections,* III, 33-34.

[6] Anderson, *William Branch Giles,* p. 159.

with the Giles clique.[7] Both Pope and Worthington were out of touch with Republican sentiment in the states they represented.

As there were men from the border who opposed the war, and cared nothing for territorial expansion, so there were men from the older states and districts who warmly supported both. Macon of North Carolina and Matthew Clay of Virginia, and a considerable part of the Pennsylvania delegation showed unquestioned zeal for the war program and the annexation of Canada. In general, however, our thesis holds good—that enthusiasm for war and annexation was at its height at the periphery of the crescent, while faction flourished most luxuriantly near the center.

It is near the center too that we find all that remained of Federalist strength outside its northeastern stronghold. For whereas, in the Twelfth Congress, New Jersey had no Federalist members and Pennsylvania but one in a delegation of eighteen, Maryland contributed three Federalists, Virginia six, and North Carolina two.[8]

Our analysis thus far has regarded only the contrasting views and factions within the Republican party.

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[7] Kentucky *Gazette,* Mar. 26, 1811, June 9, 1812. *Annals of Congress,* 11 Cong, 3 sess., pp. 219, 346.

[8] Niles' *Register,* I, 233-234. In Virginia, the Federalist stronghold was not, as we might expect, in the tide-water region, but west of the Blue Ridge, in the Valley of Virginia, and still farther to the west on the Great Kanawha. Ambler, *Sectionalism in Virginia,* pp. 87-93. For a brief account of Federalism in North Carolina at this time, see Dodd, *Life of Nathaniel Macon,* pp. 242, 275.

It has ignored what was obviously a factor of vast importance, the Federalism of the Northeast. In Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, all states with large frontier elements, the Republicans were for the moment in control; the elections of 1812 were to turn them out in both New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Delaware were in almost undisputed Federalist control. New York was about to convert a Republican majority of twelve to five (in its delegation to Congress) to a Federalist majority of nineteen to eight, and to elect a Federalist senator.

The Federalist party, grounded chiefly in the mercantile and financial interests of the coast towns, the college-bred professional men, the more solid and "respectable" elements in society, was fairly homogeneous in its creeds of both foreign and domestic politics. Abroad, it looked upon Napoleon as Anti-Christ and endorsed Pickering's famous toast, "The world's last hope—Britain's fast-anchored Isle." In home affairs, it was convinced, not without cause, by the measures of the last few years, that the Republican administration had deliberately resolved to ruin its commerce and dissipate its prosperity. Holding these views, it could see no worse national crime than a war against England which would render indirect aid to Napoleon, and no worse disaster to its own interests than a form of expansion which would mean new states to increase the Republican strength in Congress. Its attitude toward

the pending measures is easy to deduce.[9] The Federalists were in a small minority in the Twelfth Congress in both House and Senate, but their six votes in the Senate, when combined with those of recalcitrant Republicans, were often enough to defeat important administration measures.[10]

Upon the question of war with Great Britain, a miscalculated notion of political expediency led the Federalists in Congress into an equivocal position. Failing to take the correct measure of the rising war spirit, they held to the belief, expressed two years before by Quincy of Massachusetts, that the Republicans "could not be kicked" into hostilities. Quincy regarded the war talk indulged in by the Westerners, when Congress convened, as "ludicrous"; and he wrote to Harrison Gray Otis in Boston, suggesting the proper stand for Federalists to take.

"Instead of suffering themselves to believe and inculcating the belief in others," he wrote, "that the design of administration is a British war; let them understand, and let them make it apparent to the people, that their real design is to embarrass commerce and annihilate its influence, as a part of a system, which has for its objects, the present advancement of their personal views and the permanent elevation of the interests of the planting States over the commercial. Let them go further. Let them set themselves about con-

[9] Morison, *Harrison Gray Otis,* II, chap. xix.

[10] The actual strength in the Twelfth Congress was: Senate, Rep. 28, Fed. 6; House, Rep. 105, Fed. 37. Niles' *Register,* I, 233-234.

vincing the people of our section of the country that the present situation of the commercial part of the country *is worse than any war, even a British,* and that if administration mean to force us to take one, or the other, that although they cannot justify the principle of such war, yet that in its political effects, foreign war in any supposable calamity is preferable to the evils we now feel and may fairly anticipate."[11]

Acting upon this principle, Otis and other Federalists voted in favor of the administration's war measures. Two unnamed Federalists even told the British minister that they would help to involve the government in an inevitably unsuccessful war, which must lead in turn to the downfall of the Republicans and an early peace under a Federalist administration. But shrewd as the plan was, it could command little support from the great body of Federalists who regarded England's power as the "bulwark of the liberties of this country and of mankind." In Quincy himself it was based on a firm belief that the war talk was "bluff," and he in the end voted against the declaration of war.[12]

The strength of the Federalists' opposition to a British war was almost equalled by their antipathy to territorial expansion and the admission of new states in the southwest. Such accretions, they felt, could only increase the number of the "planter States" and so intrench in power those interests which wished to destroy

[11] Morison, *Harrison Gray Otis,* II, 30-34.
[12] Ibid., II, pp. 34-36. Adams, *United States,* VI, 174, quoting Foster's dispatches to his government.

New England commerce. Thus, in January and February, 1811, they had opposed in a body the bill authorizing the occupation of the Floridas and the enabling act which permitted the people of Orleans territory to form a constitution and seek admission as a state. Against the second measure Quincy had argued at length, taking the ground that the Constitution contained no warrant for the grant of statehood to a territory not within the original national domain; and his speech contained the famous declaration: "If this bill passes, it is my deliberate opinion that it is virtually a dissolution of this Union; that it will free the States from their moral obligation, and, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, definitely to prepare for a separation,—amicably if they can, violently if they must."[13]

It is thus apparent that the nation in 1812 was divided by a two-fold cleavage. There was, first, the line between East and West, or more accurately, between the frontier crescent from New Hampshire to Georgia, and the more settled and stable portions of the country. Here war men and annexationists, all Republicans, were opposed, in the north by New England Federalism, and in the Middle States, from New York to North Carolina, by the factious and anti-war Republicans with a scattering of Federalists. Cutting across this line at right angles was a second line of cleavage between the

[13] Vote on the Florida bill, *Annals of Congress*, 11 Cong., 3 sess., pp. 374, 1138. Vote on enabling act for Orleans territory, ibid., pp. 127, 577. Quincy's speech, ibid., pp. 524 ff.

commercial and the planter states, the free and the slave states. In terms of bitterness and distrust, this line cut far deeper than the first. Between East and West there might be disagreement in interests and ideals; between New England Federalism and Southern Planterdom there was implacable enmity. Thus the Federalists formed the nucleus for a sectional Northern party. How real was the tie that bound northern Republicans to their political allies in the South?

Up to the winter of 1812 northern Republicans had as a rule supported southern policies. The enabling act for Orleans territory had been opposed by only three Republicans in the Senate—Gilman of New Hampshire, German of New York, and Reed of Maryland—and one in the House—Van Rensselaer of New York. The bill for the occupation of Florida had received even fuller support, Reed of Maryland casting the only northern Republican vote against it. On these measures, too, the few southern Federalists had voted with their New England colleagues.

But before the Twelfth Congress had been long in session, it appeared that a sectional cleavage existed which might split both parties into northern and southern groups, and that even the Westerners of the extreme war party were susceptible to jealousies between North and South. The measure which brought to light this sectional cleavage was the bill for the new apportionment of representation on the basis of the Third Census. November 22, 1811, the House passed a bill providing that there should be, in the next Congress,

one representative for each 37,000 of the population. The Senate changed the unit to 35,000. Senator Cutts of New Hampshire explained the situation in a letter of December 11 to Governor Plumer.

"The settling the ratio upon the census," wrote Cutts, "has become a very difficult thing and is exciting a great deal of interest; the House fixed it at 37,000, upon the principle, that was the highest at which no state would lose a member, an unfortunate number for N[ew] H[ampshire], but when the bill came into the Senate other things were taken into view, particularly what bearing it would have upon the Presidential election and it was found that 35,000 would best suit the Northern interest. Accordingly, a rare thing, all the States north of the Potomac united in that. It has now become a party question North ag[ains]t South."[14]

The amended measure was returned to the House and debated December 5. Gholson of Virginia called attention to the disadvantages which the South would suffer under the Senate's figure. Nine northern states, he showed, with a population of three and one-half millions, would have unrepresented fractional populations of 82,000; eight southern states with a population ("federal number") of three millions, would have unrepresented fractional populations of 167,000, which on a *pro rata* basis was 98,000 more than their due proportion. "By adopting the Senate's amendment," Gholson continued, "the Eastern States, moreover, gain

[14] *William Plumer Letters, MSS.*, 1809-1815, pp. 175-176.

nine Representatives, the Southern States two only. The ratio of 35,000 is therefore peculiarly unequal in its operation, and consequently unjust. . . . Geographical comparisons and local distinctions are at all times, sir, repugnant to my feelings. . . . But I have been driven into the remarks which I have made by the course this business and the debate upon it have taken. . . . If I understood the gentleman [Mr. Smilie, a Pennsylvania Republican, whose remarks are not reported], he said that the secret was, that the Southern people wanted the preponderance. . . . Whatever may be intended, the observation is unmerited, and I repel it."[15]

The House refused to agree to the Senate amendment and returned the bill to the upper body. The Senate voted, 18 to 16, to adhere to its amendment, Federalists and northern Republicans from New Hampshire to Maryland uniting to form the majority. With the exception of the senators from New Jersey and Ohio, who voted against the measure, a solid North faced a solid South across the Potomac. The House thereupon yielded, and by a majority of 72 to 62 accepted the Senate amendment. Here again, party lines gave way to sectional. Virginia, the Carolinas, Kentucky, and Tennessee cast solid votes against acceptance, Federalists voting with Republicans. The only affirmative votes from the South were two from Georgia. From north of the Potomac there were fourteen

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[15] *Annals of Congress*, 12 Cong., I, pp. 411-412.

negative votes, one (a Federalist) from Maryland, one from Ohio, and the remainder from Pennsylvania and New Jersey.[16]

Governor Plumer of New Hampshire scented serious danger in the sectional antagonism here displayed. "There is no state of parties, that can ever arise in this country," he wrote to Senator Cutts, "that, in my opinion, is so much to be deprecated, as that designated by *geographical* lines. Such parties are dangerous to the Union—and if they become strong they or the Union of the States must soon be dissolved. . . . But I hope that Congress in settling this question will not by their debates and votes proclaim to the world, that they believe the interests of the North and of the South are in reality hostile to each other. Your present course is, you may rely upon it, highly grateful to certain federal characters in New England—who have long privately supported a division of the States."[17]

If, as appears from the foregoing, there was developing a sectional consciousness which could on occasion transcend the older partisan lines, allying Federalists and Republicans of either section against the other; if

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[16] Ibid., pp. 31, 558.

[17] *William Plumer Letters, MSS.*, 1809-1815, p. 179. It is interesting to compare these words of Plumer's with some expressions of his earlier Federalist days. "We have no part in Jefferson and no inheritance in Virginia," he had written in 1804. "Shall we return to our homes, sit under our own vines and fig trees and be separate from slave-holders?" And again in the same year: "I fondly hope I shall live to see the righteous separated from the wicked by a geographical line." Bruce, *John Randolph of Roanoke*, I, pp. 176-177.

political leaders of each section, regardless of party, distrusted any addition to the power of the other, it would seem natural that northern and southern Republicans should have viewed differently the programs of territorial expansion now before the country. Would not northern Republicans, though till now they had supported the occupation of Florida and the admission of new states in the southwest, fear the additional power that such measures would eventually give the South? And, on the other hand, could a southern Republican like Grundy, who opposed an appropriation for the "New York Mammoth Canal" because, as he wrote Jackson, by such a measure "no other purpose could be answered except to increase the power of the Northern Section of the Union,"[18] favor wholeheartedly the annexation of Canada, which would mean eventually the addition of several northern states? Kentuckians, perhaps, might wish with equal zeal for expansion north and south, for Kentucky was at once so southern as to feel a vital interest in the river outlets to the Gulf, and so northern as to be tragically alive to the dangers arising from British manipulation of the Indians of the Northwest. But the states north and northeast of Kentucky could hope to receive no benefit, and must see a political danger, in annexing Florida, while the states to the south and southeast must feel a similarly lukewarm interest in the annexation of Canada.

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[18] Grundy to Andrew Jackson, Feb. 12, 1812. *Jackson Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 9.

If, however, the two measures could go hand in hand, and Canada and Florida be at once added to the national domain, then the expansionists of both sections could fulfill their hopes, and the balance of power would remain substantially unchanged. When, therefore, we find southern men advocating the conquest and annexation of Canada, we may suspect that they expected in return northern support for their own annexation program. If they were to carry through their designs upon Florida, they must hold New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio true to the alliance which the Apportionment Bill had shown to be in danger, and Canada was to be the price. That some such bargain was actually made seems clear from events during this session of Congress, but it came only after months of maneuvering.

Grundy of Tennessee had no desire, as we have seen, to increase the relative power of the northern states. Nevertheless, he was willing to give a *quid pro quo*, and it was by him that the possibility of a mutually advantageous arrangement was first proclaimed in Congress. "The idea I am about to advance," he declared in the House, December 9, "is at war, I know, with the sentiments of the gentleman from Virginia [Randolph]; I am willing to receive the Canadians as adopted brethren; it will have beneficial political effects; it will preserve the equilibrium of the Government. When Louisiana shall be fully peopled, the Northern States will lose their power; they will be at the discretion of others; they can be depressed at pleasure, and

then this Union might be endangered—I therefore feel anxious not only to add the Floridas to the South, but the Canadas to the North of this empire."[19]

The offer of a bargain was sufficiently plain, and it was probably in reply to it that John A. Harper of New Hampshire, one of the most insistent of the northern expansionists, announced three weeks later his belief that "the Author of Nature has marked our limits in the south, by the Gulf of Mexico; and on the north, by the regions of eternal frost."[20]

Grundy and Harper thus seemed to be in entire agreement, and it is possible that the two Republican wings might have come to an early understanding had not John Randolph taken it upon himself to warn his southern colleagues of the fraud about to be perpetrated upon them, and incidentally to drag the sectional issue into full daylight.

"He could but smile," Randolph declared, December 10, "at the liberality of the gentleman [Grundy] in giving Canada to New York, in order to strengthen the Northern balance of power, while at the same time he forewarned her that the Western scale must preponderate. Mr. R[andolph] said he could almost fancy that he saw the Capitol in motion towards the falls of the Ohio—after a short sojourn taking its flight to the Mississippi, and finally alighting in Darien; which, when the gentleman's dreams are realized, will

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[19] *Annals of Cong.*, 12 Cong., I, 426-427.
[20] Ibid., p. 657.

be a most eligible seat of government for the new Republic (or Empire) of the two Americas! . . . He was unwilling, however, under present circumstances, to take Canada at the risk of the Constitution—to embark in a common cause with France and be dragged at the heels of the car of some Burr or Bonaparte. For a gentleman from Tennessee or Genesee, or Lake Champlain, there may be some prospect of advantage. Their hemp will bear a great price by the exclusion of foreign supply. In that too the great importers were deeply interested. The upper country on the Hudson and the Lakes would be enriched by the supplies for the troops, which they alone could furnish. They would have the exclusive market; to say nothing of the increased preponderance from the acquisition of Canada and that section of the Union [sic], which the Southern and Western States had already felt so severely in the apportionment bill."

Mr. Randolph then turned to the defenceless state of the Chesapeake and the danger which, with the militia drawn off to Canada, might arise from the negro population, corrupted, so he declared, by the French Revolution.[21]

Six days later Randolph renewed his attack:

"Sir, if you go to war it will not be for the protection of, or defence of your maritime rights. Gentlemen from the north have been taken up into some high mountain and shown all the kingdoms of the earth;

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[21] Ibid., pp. 441 ff.

and Canada seems tempting in their sight. That rich vein of Genesee land, which is said to be even better on the other side of the lake than on this. Agrarian cupidity, not maritime right, urges the war. Ever since the report of the Committee on Foreign Relations came into the House, we have heard but one word —like the whippoor-will, but one eternal monotonous tone—Canada! Canada! Canada! Not a syllable about Halifax, which unquestionably should be our great object in a war for maritime security. It is to acquire a preponderating northern influence, that you are to launch into war."[22]

Yet again, on January 9, 1812, Randolph declaimed upon the danger of sectional jealousy inherent in the expansion policy:

"You are laying the foundation for a secession from the Union—on the north, by the possession of Canada, and on the borders of the Ohio, for another division. The Ohio has been made the line between the slave-holding States and those which hold no slaves. He need not call the attention of the House to this distinction, nor to the jealousies and animosities growing out of the subject."[23]

John Randolph's influence was at this time at perhaps its lowest ebb. A great man he had been and was again to be. But at the time when war was being debated in Congress, he had cut himself off from his

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[22] Ibid., p. 533.
[23] Ibid., p. 712.

party and stood almost alone. Scarcely a Republican, save Stanford of North Carolina,[24] came orally to his support. Are his speeches, which have been quoted at seemingly disproportionate length, therefore unimportant? Perhaps the question should be answered in the light of subsequent events. If we reflect how, a few years later, Randolph became the organizer of the slave-holding South,[25] we may perhaps see in his frank declaration of sectionalism on the Canadian question the first step in his return to power. If this were true, we should expect to see some suggestions of his influence in the conduct of southern war Republicans. In fact, some such suggestions do appear.

The tactics of Giles, Smith, and Leib in the Senate had forced upon the administration, instead of the additional regular army force of 10,000 for which it had asked, a measure providing for an additional force of 25,000—a force which, because of the long term of service and other unfavorable conditions, no reasonable man expected to see recruited.[26] The alternative was the use of militia, or volunteers, which was authorized to the number of 50,000 men. (Bill approved Feb. 6, 1812.) But no sooner had debate begun upon the Volunteer Bill than the perplexing question arose whether under the Constitution, these volunteers could be used beyond the boundaries of the United States. The ques-

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[24] Ibid., pp. 664 ff.

[25] Adams, *John Randolph*, p. 290.

[26] For Monroe's explanation of the probable working of the Army Bill, see below, pp. 159-160.

tion was debated at wearying length and with a variety of opinions.[27] Congress declined to settle it one way or the other, and passed the bill with the matter still in doubt; but the very doubt made it clear that no energetic use could be made of these forces for purposes of invasion. This unfortunate situation affected northern and southern aspirations quite differently. West Florida was already, by law and proclamation, American soil. East Florida, by the Act of January 15, 1811, could almost be so regarded. Technically, therefore,—even had the southern militia had those "constitutional scruples" on the subject from which Jackson declared they were free[28]—they might nevertheless have been marched into Florida, and no very large force, presumably, would be needed for its occupation. But Canada was plainly foreign soil; its invasion would require a force of considerable size; and any interpretation that restricted the use of the militia to the American side of the boundary was an almost fatal hindrance to a campaign of conquest. If Canada was to be conquered, some new provision seemed indispensable.

If any man in Congress wished wholeheartedly for the conquest of Canada, that man was Peter B. Porter, of Black Rock, near Buffalo, New York—the "gentleman from Genesee" who had drawn Randolph's sarcasm. During the debate on the Volunteer Bill, Porter had given notice that when that bill had been disposed

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[27] *Annals of Congress,* 12 Cong., I, 727 ff.

[28] Jackson to the Secretary of War, January, 1813. Parton, *Andrew Jackson,* I, 372.

of, he would introduce a resolution looking to the organization of a Provisional Army of 20,000 men, to be formed from both regulars and volunteers and used at the President's discretion, without or within the national boundaries. Such an army would remedy both the shortage of troops caused by failure to recruit the regular army, and the doubt about the availability of the ordinary volunteers. It appears to have been the most practical suggestion offered for a force which could actually and promptly effect the reduction of Canada. Porter himself spoke in support of this resolution,[29] and without debate it was put to vote February 18 and lost by a vote of 49 to 58.[30]

The defeat of the Provisional Army proposal was serious, but more serious and far more significant was the alignment of states by which it was defeated. The resolution was supported by Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Tennessee, and Maryland. Against it were Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, New Jersey, North and South Carolina, and Georgia; while New Hampshire, Kentucky, and Virginia were evenly divided. In other words, those states having a direct interest in the acquisition of Canada—the states of the northwestern border—voted for the resolution, while an almost solid South joined with Federalist New England to defeat it. Put in another way, not a state south of the Potomac and

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[29] *Annals of Cong.*, 12 Cong., I, 1058-1069.
[30] Ibid., p. 1069.

east of the Alleghanies voted for the resolution; not a state bordering Canadian territory (if we except Massachusetts with her district of Maine) voted against it. More significant still was the defection of a group of southern war men—all of them in the front rank of the war party—Desha of Kentucky, Troup and Bibb of Georgia, Cheves and Lowndes of South Carolina and Grundy of Tennessee—the last as if frightened by his own recent prophecy—the prospect of too great an addition to the northern scale. Whatever the actual military value of Porter's proposal, it appealed to those men and sections having the most obvious interest in a successful invasion of Canada. Its defeat by southern votes indicates that Randolph's speeches had had weight and that Southerners feared they were about to pay too high a price for having their way in the Floridas.

More than two months later southern Republicans remained in the same doubtful position toward the conquest of Canada—at least if we may believe a bit of cautious testimony from one of the more moderate Federalists, Senator Bayard of Delaware.

"Judging from the course of conversation," wrote Bayard in May, "it would seem that the plan of the war is changing. The Western and Southern Gentlemen are alarmed at a point very seriously insisted upon by the Northern—that in case Canada is conquered it shall be divided into states and inalienably incorporated into the Union. You will see the great and permanent weight which such an event would throw into the

northern scale. No proposition could have been more frightful to the southern men, and it seems that they had never thought of what they were to do with Canada before, in case they conquered the country, but they prefer that Canada should remain a British Province rather than become States of America. The consequence has been that they now begin to talk of maritime war, and of the ocean being the only place where G[reat] Britain is tangible. What I am now telling you is not an affair generally or publicly spoken of. It has existed but a short time and passes as yet in whispers and a semi-confidential way. I am inclined to think it true and likely to produce important results."[31]

The most active man in pressing the point mentioned by Bayard—that Canada if conquered must be retained—was John A. Harper of New Hampshire. Less than two weeks after the date of Bayard's letter, Harper wrote to the New Hampshire executive a forecast of the opening moves of the war. Among them, he thought, would be "an address to the people of Canada that they shall be protected in their persons, property and religion, and that that country shall be incorporated with and become a part of the Union. Upon the last proposition," Harper continued, "I have had much labor. I have no idea of having a war for several years to conquer the British Provinces and then surrender them by negociation and unless we can have a pledge

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[31] James A. Bayard to Andrew Bayard, May 2, 1812. *Papers of James A. Bayard*: *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1913, II, 196.

that once conquered, they shall be retained, I will never give my vote to send an army there. I have reflected much upon this question and used all my influence to have it effected. I am in hopes of being successful. Until I made the proposition I believe it was not agitated by any member of Congress or of the Executive."[32]

Harper's letter supplies the key to Bayard's. Harper was pressing for a pledge that Canada should be retained. The southern members were reluctant—"I have had much labor," said Harper. We may piece out the story with some expressions in a speech of Senator Hunter of Rhode Island in the following winter. "The declaration that Canada should be conquered and retained," according to Hunter's story, "was the exacted pledge of the Northern men who voted for the war." The wording is noticeably similar to Harper's and indicates that Harper secured his object. But Senator Hunter also related how it was managed. The terms of the bargain, he declared, were "an enlargement and arrondissement of the territory at the two extremities: a fair division of the spoil," and he added that the southern men had taken the position: "We consent that you may conquer Canada, permit us to conquer Florida."[33]

Senator Hunter was a Federalist, and his testimony relative to Republican log-rolling is to be received with

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[32] Harper to Plumer, May 13, 1812. *William Plumer Letters, MSS.*, 1809-1815, pp. 293 ff.

[33] *Annals of Congress*, 13 Cong., I, 528.

caution, but this statement fits so neatly with the known situation that we cannot disregard it.

That such a bargain as he described had been reached is further indicated by events in Congress immediately following the declaration of war. War was declared June 18. Next day Troup of Georgia moved a resolution in the House instructing the committee formerly appointed to consider relations with the Spanish-American colonies, to inquire into the expediency of authorizing the President to occupy East and West Florida, and to report to the House on that subject.[34] June 22, Mitchill of New York, chairman of the committee, introduced a bill which was intended eventually to embody the agreement between the two expansionist groups. The bill as introduced concerned only Florida. It authorized the President "to occupy and hold, the whole or any part of East Florida, including Amelia Island, and also those parts of West Florida which are not now in possession and under the jurisdiction of the United States." An appropriation of $100,000 was provided, and the President was authorized to use the military and naval forces to effect the occupation, and to set up a temporary government in the territory occupied. Finally, to palliate the character of the seizure, it was provided, "That the section of country herein designated, that is situated to the Eastward of the river Perdido, may be the subject of further negotiation."

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[34] Ibid., 12 Cong., II, 1683.

The bill was promptly passed by the House, June 25, and sent to the Senate.[35]

In the preceding chapter it was seen that Senator Crawford of Georgia was in close touch, and also in close sympathy, with the measures by which parts of East Florida had already been occupied by American troops. It is not unlikely that Harper should have gone to him in his efforts to secure support for the annexation of Canada. Crawford, at any rate, now came forward with an amendment to the House bill which coupled Canada with Florida, carefully balancing point with point. Crawford's amendment, which the Senate adopted July 2, provided that, if the United States should obtain possession "of the British provinces in North America, or either of them," the President should have authority to establish therein a temporary government "for the protection and maintenance of the inhabitants of such province or provinces, in the full enjoyment of their property, liberty, and religion." Then, as if to balance the "further negotiation" clause of the Florida provisions, a clause different in form but similar in intent was added: "Provided, That the principles upon which such temporary government shall be established, shall form no obstacle to the restoration of peace between the two nations."[36]

Under the bill as thus amended the nation stood upon precisely similar footing in its proposed invasions of East Florida and of Canada. Both might be occupied

[35] Ibid., 12 Cong., I, 324; II, 1684-1685.
[36] Ibid., I, 325.

by the nation's armed forces, both might be provided with temporary governments, but in the case of each, the question of permanent possession was left open to further negotiation. The amendment was accepted by both wings of the war party; every Republican who had voted for the declaration of war supported it, except Smith of Maryland. The bill was passed to third reading next day. Then, when the passage of the bill—and with it the sealing of the compact between North and South—seemed assured, three of the foes of the administration—Giles, Leib, and Pope—swung over to join the Federalists. With them voted the two New York senators, Gilman of New Hampshire, and Smith of Maryland—men whom the previous votes on the bill had already shown in opposition. The votes of any two of them would have passed the measure; without them it was defeated by a vote of 14 to 16.[37]

Thus, when northern and southern expansionists had patched up their differences, Republican factionalism, with its center in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, put the whole annexation program in jeopardy.

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[37] Ibid., I, 326.

CHAPTER IV

The Invasion of Canada

"Upon the whole, I have known no war entered into under more favorable auspices." In these words, when the war was ten days old, Thomas Jefferson expressed his optimism. "Our present enemy will have the sea to herself," he thought, "while we shall be equally predominant at land, and shall strip her of all her possessions on this continent. . . . The infamous intrigues of Great Britain to destroy our government (of which Henry's is but one sample), and with the Indians to tomahawk our women and children, prove that the cession of Canada, their fulcrum for these Machiavellian levers, must be a *sine qua non* at a treaty of peace."[1] Five weeks later he wrote with equal confidence to Colonel Duane: "The acquisition of Canada this year, as far as the neighborhood of Quebec, will be a mere matter of marching, and will give us experience for the attack of Halifax the next, and the final expulsion of England from the American continent."[2]

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[1] Jefferson to Koskiusko, June 28, 1812. *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, VI, 67.

[2] Aug. 4, 1812. Ibid., VI, 75.

To one who remembered with what energy Montgomery and Arnold, in the autumn of 1775, had thrown themselves upon the northern colony, and how only a lucky shot had saved Quebec for England, such an expectation seemed reasonable enough. The United States had grown vastly in population and resources, while the defences of Canada had necessarily been weakened by the twenty years of war in Europe. In all Canada there were but 4500 regular troops; the American Congress, on the other hand, had authorized a regular force of 35,000, while in militia the potential American strength was ten times the Canadian.[3]

But to those who had followed the half-hearted measures of preparation in Congress and who realized the inexperience and want of energy, not to say incompetence, of vital branches of the executive, the prospects did not appear so bright. Nathaniel Macon, at the end of March, had described the way in which Congress prepared for war.

"Whatever we do," he wrote, "we do it rashly, and scarcely do anything in the second best way, and generally find out weeks after, that we have not acted in the manner we ought to have done; in this manner we shall I apprehend get to war, not half fixed for it, under the belief that then we shall do things as we ought to do; this will I fear on experience be discovered a mistake. Be not surprised that I have said we act rashly, because it happens to public bodies as it sometimes does

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[3] Mahan, *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*, I, 291.

to individuals, who talk a great deal about what they intend to do, but delay to do it in due season, or put it off till they are compelled to do it precipitately; in such cases Governments or individuals generally put the strong mark of rashness on their acts."[4]

The fatuous expectation here described (but not entertained) by Macon was precisely that of which Madison spoke in 1836, when he told Mr. Bancroft that "he knew the unprepared state of the country, but he esteemed it necessary to throw forward the flag of the country, sure that the people would press forward and defend it."[5]

In Madison himself, as a war President and head of the army and navy, there was little confidence. "Our President tho a man of amiable manners and great talents," wrote Calhoun, "has not I fear those commanding talents, which are necessary to control those about him. He permits division in his cabinet. He reluctantly gives up the system of peace. It is to be hoped, that as war is now seriously determined on, the Executive department will move with much more vigor. Without it, it is impossible for Congress to proceed."[6] Some years after the war Calhoun affirmed that a majority of those "in our own ranks . . . . anticipated anything rather than the successful termination of the

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[4] Macon to Nicholson, Mar. 31, 1812. *Joseph H. Nicholson Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 5.

[5] Schouler, *United States*, II, 351, note.

[6] Calhoun to James MacBride, Apr. 18, 1812. *James MacBride Papers, MSS.*, 1808-1817.

war. . . . It did not seem to me possible that any who then took a part could now doubt, that there was the deepest distrust, as to the capacity of our government to sustain the shocks of war; or in other words, whether the virtue and intelligence of the people were sufficient for self-government under the sure trials incident to war. . . . Almost all, friends and foes, expected that the war party would be turned out; not because the cause of the war was not just, or that in the abstract it was not right to resist; but because the people would not bear its burdens."[7]

Jefferson had no fear that the people of the country would not support a just war; yet it is hard to see how he could cherish such optimism as his in the face of what Madison himself had written him.

"The newspapers give you a sufficient insight into the measures of Congress," the President had written in February. "With a view to enable the Executive to step at once into Canada, they have provided, after two months' delay, for a regular force, requiring twelve to raise it, on terms not likely to raise it at all for that object. The mixture of good and bad, avowed and disguised motives accounting for these things, is curious enough, but not to be explained in the compass of a letter."[8]

Madison's estimate of the military measures adopted by Congress was all too true; but he might have gone

[7] Calhoun to Virgil Maxcy, Sept. 9, 1825. *Galloway-Maxcy-Markoe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 34.

[8] Madison to Jefferson, Feb. 7, 1812. *Writings of James Madison*, VIII, 175.

further and added that Congress had failed to provide funds for carrying on the war; and the complaint on both points would have been as sound when Congress adjourned in July as in February. On January 10, Gallatin, the Secretary of the Treasury, had laid before the House Committee on Ways and Means his estimate of the money required by the government for the ensuing fiscal year and his suggestions for raising it. He placed the fixed charges at $9,600,000 and the expenses incident to war at $10,000,000. The customs receipts at existing rates and under war conditions he estimated at only $2,500,000. The very conservative estimate of $10,000,000 as the cost of a year of war, Gallatin proposed to meet by a loan of that amount. To meet the fixed charges and the accruing interest on new loans, he proposed an increase in the import duties which should bring their yield up to $6,000,000, and internal taxes to the amount of $5,000,000.[9]

Something like dismay fell upon the House Republicans when they were thus confronted with even a very moderate estimate of the cost of war. Evidently many shared Calhoun's fear that the people were unwilling to bear the burdens of war, when those burdens appeared not only as higher import duties, but as taxes on spirits, sugar, licenses to retailers, auctions, stamps, and carriages—"the whole armory of Federalism" as Henry Adams remarks. Reluctantly the House brought itself to the adoption, by the 4th of March, of

[9] *Annals of Congress,* 12 Cong., I, 848-858.

a series of resolutions favoring the proposals for increased taxation.[10] But there the matter rested. "Every one admitted that while war was still uncertain, the financial policy undecided, and a Presidential election approaching, only the prospect of immediate bankruptcy would outweigh the dangers of oppressive taxation."[11] Not until June 26 were the bills embodying the increases introduced into the House, and the House thereupon by a vote of 72 to 46, postponed action upon them until the next session.[12] Adjournment found the Treasury unrelieved by any measure of Congress, save the authorization of a loan of $11,000,000 at 6 per cent. redeemable in twelve years, of which only a little over six millions were subscribed.[13]

We have seen Madison's dissatisfaction with the Congressional provision of an army of 35,000 regulars (an increase of 25,000 over the existing force), which, as related in the preceding chapter, had been forced to passage largely through the influence of Giles and his friends in the Senate. The government's objections to the measure were set forth more in detail by Monroe in a letter of June 13 to Colonel John Taylor.

"The habitual opponents of the government," he wrote, "and some who have lately become so by particular causes, more violent than the old Federalists,"

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[10] Ibid., I, 1155.
[11] Adams, *United States,* VI, 168.
[12] Ibid., VI, 235. *Annals of Congress,* 12 Cong., II, 1554-1558.
[13] Adams, *United States,* VI, 169, 207. *U. S. Statutes at Large,* II, 694.

had expected to find the administration advocating half-measures like those of the years preceding, and had come to Washington "prepared to treat with vast asperity and contempt such an inefficient expedient." But when they found that the administration really meant war, they were forced to seek a new means of carrying out their obstructionist policy. This they found, according to Monroe, in the Army Bill.

"The committees of foreign relations in the two Houses, and of war," the letter continued, ". . . consulted the administration as to the force that would be necessary for the purpose. The object of the administration was not to starve the cause. In case of war it might be necessary to invade Canada, not as an object of the war but as a means to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. The estimate of the force had relation to that measure. . . . The administration thought that 20,000 men (regulars) with volunteers and militia would be adequate to every object. The old establishment was 10,000, which it was proposed to complete, to be enlisted for five years; the other 10,000 to be enlisted for a shorter term. As soon as this estimate was known the persons alluded to separated themselves immediately from the government, taking what was called strong ground, and introducing a bill for 25,000 additional troops, making in the whole 35,000, all for five years. By this they attempted to gain credit, as being great advocates for war, and to throw discredit on the administration by implying on account of the moderation of its views that it was not in earnest, and really did not

contemplate war. By enlisting the whole for *five* years, a difficult thing in this country, the means for making war were put at a distance; and by the volunteer plan . . . by keeping the appointment of officers out of the hands of the President, that force was rendered nugatory."[14]

Whether or not the motives of those who had thwarted the administration were as base as Monroe believed (and it is to be noted that Clay and Lowndes had supported the larger force), there can be no doubt that the five-year term of enlistment was a serious bar to recruiting the regular army. Even in Kentucky, where the spirit of war was hottest, only four hundred men had enlisted up to July, and Clay wrote Monroe: "Such is the structure of our society . . . that I doubt whether many can be engaged for a longer term than six months."[15] When war was declared, some four thousand men had been recruited; the total regular force did not exceed ten thousand men, and these were scattered over the country in a dozen or more garrisons from which they could not be safely withdrawn.[16]

The military outlook outside the regular army is well summarized by Henry Adams. "In February, Congress authorized the President to accept fifty thousand volunteers for one year's service. In June, the number of volunteers who had offered themselves was even smaller than that of regular recruits. In April,

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[14] *Writings of James Monroe,* V, 206-208.
[15] Adams, *United States,* VI, 391.
[16] Ibid., VI, 289, 295.

Congress authorized the President to call out one hundred thousand State militia. In June, no one knew whether all the States would regard the call, and still less whether the militia would serve beyond the frontier";[17] and it may be added that the last doubt applied equally to the volunteers.

State militia, many of whom proved entirely unavailable for national employment; a few thousand volunteers officered and organized under state law; both forces to a large extent unwilling to follow the flag across the border; a regular army of ten thousand men, half of it unavailable for use on the northern frontier—this, even had it been well commanded, was not a promising military machine with which to effect the conquest of Canada. And it cannot be said that the officers were superior to the machine. The two major-generals were Henry Dearborn and Thomas Pinckney, both appointed to the army within the year. The list of brigadier-generals, headed by the notorious James Wilkinson, fresh from a series of trials by court-martial, contained the names of Wade Hampton, Joseph Bloomfield, James Winchester, and William Hull. Of the seven, only three had records in the regular service. The others were chosen either for distinction won in other fields or for some slight service in the army of the Revolution. Not one was to display any military talents upon the battlefields of 1812. They were old men in years—a fact perhaps not in itself against them

[17] Ibid., VI, 295.

—but unfortunately they were not old in military experience.[18]

To military weakness must be added naval weakness —not on the Atlantic, where any real rivalry with Great Britain was impossible—but at a point where naval superiority not only was essential to a successful campaign in western Canada, but where it might easily have been secured—namely on Lakes Ontario and Erie. But more of that in its proper place.

The weakness of the army and navy and the failure to provide adequate funds for the war chest were serious enough in themselves; but after all they were only symptomatic of a more fundamental weakness, the divided opinion of the country upon the whole war issue. The abhorrence with which New England Federalists regarded the war was seen in the last chapter. The vote on the declaration of war showed a considerable drift of Republican sentiment in the Northeast toward the Federalist position. In the House of Representatives sixteen Republicans voted with the thirty-three Federalists against the war. Of the sixteen, one each was furnished by New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia (Randolph), and North Carolina (Stanford). New York contributed seven and New Jersey four, in each case a majority of the Republicans in the state delegation. In the Senate, the six Federalists were re-enforced by seven Republicans —German of New York, Gilman of New Hampshire,

[18] Ibid., VI, 289-293.

Howell of Rhode Island, Lambert of New Jersey, Reed of Maryland, Pope of Kentucky, and Worthington of Ohio. The Senate opposition was more widely scattered than that in the House, but the bulk of Republican opposition came, like the Federalist, from the Northeast. The war was plainly a sectional war, and the strength of the opposition vote—the declaration was carried by a vote of 79 to 49 in the House, 19 to 13 in the Senate—was ominous for the success of an enterprise which would need the country's undivided support.[19]

New England's hostility to the war was no light matter. Bordering upon the territory of Lower Canada, and lying close to the waterways of Lake Champlain and the Richelieu river, New England held a position of great strategic importance for an attack on the St. Lawrence. The open discouragement of enlistments in the New England states, and the refusal of the governors of Massachusetts and Connecticut to honor the President's calls for militia were therefore serious military difficulties.

Yet more disastrous was the loss of the financial support of New England, for that section was rapidly outstripping the rest of the country in wealth. New England alone had benefited by the Embargo and other restrictive measures. The energies of her people had turned from shipping to manufactures—"exchanging the trident for the distaff," as John Randolph phrased

[19] *Annals of Congress*, 12 Cong., I, 297; II, 1637.

it; and every measure, whether of embargo or blockade, that hampered the coastwise trade and restricted the shipment of their crops by the middle and southern states, helped to strip them of their specie to pay for articles purchased in New England. This movement of specie was still more facilitated by the circumstance that from the beginning of the war until April, 1814, the New England coast north of Narragansett Bay was left unblockaded by the British, with the result that New England became the distributing center for practically all imports from abroad. In consequence, from 1810 to 1814, deposits in Massachusetts banks increased by three and the specie held, by four times. It is estimated that of a probable total of seventeen millions in specie in 1814, the New England banks held nearly ten millions. Under these circumstances it was to New England that the country would naturally have looked for the support of its loans; but most of the New England banks were in the hands of Federalists, and the Federalists were determined to give no financial help to the war. Indeed, Federalist bankers appeared to consider British Treasury notes not only a safer but a more righteous investment than United States bonds. "Probably," says Henry Adams, "New England lent to the British government during the war more money than she lent to her own. The total amount subscribed in New England to the United States loans were less than three millions."[20]

[20] Adams, *United States*, VII, 386-390. Mahan, *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*, I, 296-297.

Not only was New England hostile to the war *in toto*, but, as shown in the preceding chapter, the South was not likely to look with any great enthusiasm upon the incorporation of Canada as a part of the United States, especially should that section fail to receive the expected increment in Florida. And we must now face the question whether the administration, representative as it was of southern sentiment, really approached its task of conquest with enthusiasm or determination. We have already quoted from a letter of Monroe's the statement that "in case of war it might be necessary to invade Canada, not as an object of the war but as a means to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion." This view was far enough removed from western talk of the immediate expulsion from the continent of "those civilized allies of our Savage neighbors." But equally so, and of more significance, was a remark of Monroe's in his instructions to Jonathan Russell, who, remaining as *chargé d' affaires* at London, was to continue conversations with the British government upon terms of peace.

"It will, it is presumed, occur," wrote Monroe, "that a prosecution of the War for one Year, or even a few months, if not for a shorter term, will present very serious obstacles on the part of the United States to an accommodation, which do not now exist. I will advert to only one. Should our troops enter Canada you will perceive the effect which that measure cannot fail to have, by the compromitment it might make of the United States to the inhabitants of the British Prov-

inces, and the effect which success (which could not fail to attend it) might have on the public mind here, making it difficult to relinquish territory which had been conquered."[21]

Thus almost at the moment when Jefferson was writing Koskiusko that "the cession of Canada . . . must be a *sine qua non* at a treaty of peace," the Secretary of State was instructing his representative in London to explain to the British the desirability of making peace before the success of American arms in Canada should encourage public opinion to insist upon such a cession. Clearly a wide divergence of aims separated the administration from Jefferson and the western people.

Whether an attack upon Canada was to be considered as a move toward annexation, or merely as a strategic stroke to enforce American rights at sea, it was clear that such an attack must be made, for Canada was the only spot at which, in the language of the day, Great Britain was "tangible" by the United States. That fact had been apparent from the first talk of war; the government had had seven months in which to prepare; and yet when war came there was no unified plan of campaign. General Dearborn had been in Washington from February to April, and had submitted to the

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[21] Monroe to Russell, June 26, 1812. *Writings of James Monroe*, V, 212. It is significant that this paragraph is omitted from the note as published in the *State Papers*. The *Reporter* of Lexington, Ky., of Aug. 1, 1812, spoke of reports that by the terms of peace Upper and Lower Canada would be returned to Great Britain as "so ridiculous that we are almost ashamed to mention them."

Secretary of War "what was called a plan of campaign, recommending that a main army should advance by way of Lake Champlain upon Montreal, while three corps, composed chiefly of militia, should enter Canada from Detroit, Niagara, and Sackett's Harbor."[22] The plan was not without merit, but the details were never worked out, and when war opened there was no main army for the advance from Lake Champlain and only trifling forces at Sackett's Harbor and Niagara.

Thus the advance from Detroit, where General Hull with some two thousand troops arrived July 5, became the central feature of the first season's campaign. There has been much criticism of this prosecution of the attack at the wrong end of the frontier, and Admiral Mahan in particular has pointed out that the main blow should have fallen upon Montreal, thus cutting the line of communication upon which depended the retention by the British of all their posts farther west.[23] From a purely military viewpoint the criticism is perfectly sound; but as there was in the East no adequate army for the advance upon Montreal, the real question seems to be whether the force under Hull should have been transferred to the eastern theater instead of occupying Detroit and striking at western Canada.

That question cannot be answered without remembering that the great strength of the war sentiment

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[22] Adams, *United States,* VI, 297.
[23] Mahan, *op. cit.,* I, 308, 310.

was in the West, that the especial grievance of the West was the supposed intrigues of the British among the Indians, that the very center of those intrigues was thought to be at Amherstburg and Malden, and that the one sure cure for the whole Indian danger was confidently held to be the breaking up of those posts and the expulsion of the British. It is needless to ask how men holding these views would have regarded the drawing off of their military strength for an attack upon distant Montreal. Probably the most lucid explanation of the strategy involved would not have reconciled the frontiersman to a policy of leaving the Indian border lightly guarded and the hateful British posts undisturbed.

Madison himself saw the military propriety of a concentration against Montreal. The objections to it he stated cogently in a letter to Jefferson.

"It would probably have been best," he wrote, August 17, 1812, "if it had been practicable in time, to have concentrated a force which could have seized on Montreal, & thus at one stroke, have secured the upper Province, and cut off the sap that nourished Indian hostilities. But this could not be attempted, without sacrificing the Western & N. W. Frontier, threatened with an inundation of savages under the influence of the British establishment near Detroit. Another reason for the expedition of Hull was that the unanimity and ardor of Kentucky and Ohio, promised the requi-

site force at once for that service, whilst it was too distant from the other points to be assailed."[24]

But however good the excuses for an apparently faulty general strategy, it is impossible to excuse the failure to give Hull a fair prospect of success. An examination of a map of the vicinity of Detroit will show but two possible lines of communication between that post and the Ohio settlements. One, by water up the Detroit river, passed under the guns of Fort Malden, while the land route followed so closely the river and the lake shore that it might at a number of points be severed by an enemy in command of the water. It was obvious then as it is now that an army at Detroit, dependent upon the United States for supply and reenforcement, could be safe only if Lake Erie were controlled by the United States. This circumstance had been repeatedly urged upon the American government in the months preceding the declaration of war. In January, John Armstrong of New York had urged the stationing of a body of western troops "within striking distance of Indian villages or British settlements," preferably at Detroit. "Recollect, however," he continued, "that this position, far from being good, would be positively bad unless your naval means have an ascendancy on Lake Erie; because Buffalo, Erie, Cleaveland, and the two Sanduskys must be its base or source of supply."[25] An unsigned letter in the *Michigan Pioneer*

[24] *Writings of James Madison*, VIII, 211.
[25] Armstrong, *Notices of the War of 1812*, I, 237.

and Historical Collections,[26] unaddressed but seemingly written to some high government officer, urged the same point even more strongly. The only means of preventing the whole country northwest of the Maumee river from falling into British hands, the writer thought, would be "an adequate Force on the Detroit River, opposite to the settlements in Upper Canada."

"It may be asked how this Force is to be placed there and how it is to be Supported. If, Sir, we cannot command the Ocean, we can command the Inland Lakes of our Country. This we ought to do—but if there is no intention of building a Naval Force on the Lakes, superior to the British, that Communication must be abandoned until we take possession of the Canadas. . . . The answer probably will be—It is better to leave this Country to its fate, and march an army and take possession of Montreal."

Whether or not this letter ever reached Washington, the opinion here expressed must have done so. Similar views were urged upon Eustis, the Secretary of War, by Alexander Smyth, then a colonel in the regular army, who thought the command of the Lakes would be "as important as the command of the Caspian would be in a war between Russia and Persia," and pressed particularly the importance of Lake Erie as a line of communications.[27]

Hull himself, a month before accepting his commis-

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[26] Vol. XV, p. 61.

[27] Smyth to Eustis (undated). *William Eustis Papers, MSS.*, II.

sion in the army, had written the Secretary of War of the necessity for a naval force to insure the communications of Detroit. Unfortunately, in the same letter, he had suggested an alternative to the building of a navy. A force adequate to the defence of Detroit, he thought, would "probably induce the enemy to abandon the province of Upper Canada without opposition. The naval force on the Lakes would in that event fall into our possession, and we should obtain the command of the waters without the expense of building such a force."[28] It was probably upon the basis of this suggestion of "conquering the sea by the land" that the project of building a fleet on Lake Erie was abandoned. Peter B. Porter, who was not reconciled to the decision, afterwards testified: "I was twice at the President's with General Hull, when the subject of a navy was talked over. At first it was agreed to have one; but afterwards it was agreed to abandon it, doubtless as inexpedient."[29]

At the commencement of the war, therefore, the United States was destitute of naval force on Lake Erie, which was indisputably under British control. The first disaster attributable to this situation was the capture by the British of the schooner to which Hull, upon arriving at the Maumee river, had imprudently committed his official papers. The disadvantage of having the size of his force and the nature of his plans

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[28] Mahan, *op. cit.*, I, 339. Adams, *United States*, VI, 296.
[29] *Report of the Trial of Brig. General William Hull*, pp. 126-127.

thus in the enemy's possession was slight compared with the danger to his entire command when he reached Detroit and found the enemy able at will to intercept his single line of communications. His danger was so clearly seen, by some at least, that the disastrous ending of his campaign can hardly have been so great a surprise as has generally been supposed. June 28, Peter B. Porter, hearing at Black Rock that Hull was slowly approaching Detroit, inquired of Eustis how he was to be supplied with provisions. "The navigation of the Lakes is done, as I assured you in March it would be, unless we immediately built some armed vessels, as Gov. Hull and myself strongly advised, & which advice I then thought would be followed. There may be a supply of provisions at Detroit for Gov. Hull's army for two or 3 months. There are large quantities at different ports on Lake Erie, but they cannot pass Malden by water, & by land, we must pass a country without roads & inhabited by hostile Indians."[30] Henry Clay, a few weeks later, wrote to Monroe of the widespread opinion in the West that Hull's force was inadequate, and called attention to several points at which his line of communications was exposed to attack by an enterprising enemy at Malden.[31]

Two things might have saved Hull. Had he been a Montgomery, or had he been able to exchange spirits with the energetic young officer who opposed him, a

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[30] *War Dept. MSS.*

[31] Clay to Monroe, Aug. 12, 1812. *Monroe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. XIII.

sudden blow at Malden might possibly have succeeded. Again, had a vigorous attack been made at the eastern end of Lake Erie, the diversion thus effected might still have made it possible for Hull to win. But Hull was no dashing leader. He crossed to Canadian soil, issued a grandiloquent proclamation to the Canadians, and then upon the news of the fall of Michilimackinac, recrossed the river and fortified himself at Detroit. Meanwhile, Hull had warned Eustis that "If you have not a force at Niagara, the whole force of the province will be directed against this army. . . . It is important that Niagara should be invested. All our success will depend upon it."[32] At the time Hull was writing, the only force at Niagara was a few New York militia under command of no officer of the United States, while General Dearborn was leisurely proceeding from Boston to Albany, not knowing, as he wrote July 28, whether or not Niagara was actually a part of his command.[33] With nothing on the Niagara frontier to give him concern, Brock, the British commander, hastened with all his available force to Malden. Crossing the river, the British and Indians infested the road between Detroit and the American base on the Maumee.

History has done much to remove the stigma from the name of General William Hull. Energy and excessive bravery are qualities that no one would claim for him, but two considerations in part excuse his weak

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[32] Adams, *United States,* VI, 304.
[33] Ibid., VI, 310.

behavior. If he feared, it was not for himself or his command, but for the defenceless population of the territory, whom in imagination he saw the prey of enraged savages. And in the second place, it is now apparent that he walked into a trap that was not of his own making, the dangers of which he had beforehand called to the attention of his superiors. The chief blame for the disaster at Detroit belongs higher up than upon the head of this unfortunate brigadier general.

On August 16, Hull surrendered Detroit, his entire army, and a nearly completed vessel of war which lay in the harbor. On the preceding day Fort Dearborn at Chicago had been evacuated and the garrison massacred by the Indians. Michilimackinac had fallen some time previously. "Thenceforward," says Henry Adams, "the line of the Wabash and the Maumee became the military boundary of the United States in the Northwest, and the country felt painful doubt whether even that line could be defended."[34]

The laxity of General Dearborn had combined with the disaffection and lack of enthusiasm in the East to delay operations there until Hull was past helping. Eastward of Buffalo it was difficult to find much war enthusiasm. To residents along the shore of Lake Ontario or the St. Lawrence, or even farther within New York, the British of Canada appeared less in the guise of miscreants than in that of friendly traders. Less than three years earlier, a New York congressman, Mr.

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[34] Ibid., VI, 335.

Gardenier of Ulster County, had told how his constituents regarded the trade with Canada. He represented, he said, "a portion of this country, that was peculiarly and he might add exclusively interested in an intercourse with the British dominions. It is in the dominions of Great Britain, sir, said he, and in those alone that they find a market for the products of their honest toil . . . the prosperity of the farmers, 'of God's chosen people,' in the Northern and Eastern States, depends upon this intercourse."[35] Such people, naturally, were not friendly to the thought of war with England, or very likely to help the cause. Others feared a positive commercial disadvantage in the annexation of Canada to the United States, no matter how easily or cheaply effected. Thus Mr. D. A. Ogden, who owned a plantation on the St. Lawrence river, stated in 1811 that he "would regret much (between ourselves) that Quebec should not remain in the possession of the English. They charge us no Duties," he continued, "upon Exports down the River, and our produce being shipped from Canada as the products of a British Colony, we obtain the Bounty, or Discriminating Duties. On the Article of Pot and Pearl Ashes—the difference is equal to $20 per ton—which renders these articles worth $10 more in Montreal than New York—and on Lumber the difference is much greater."[36]

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[35] *Annals of Congress*, 11 Cong., I, 958. Dec. 28, 1809.

[36] D. A. Ogden to Wm. Short, June 20, 1811. *William Short Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 36.

Just how much such sentiment there was in New York we have no means of knowing; but the army grew slowly there. In the neighboring state of Vermont a correspondent of Madison's informed him that there was little willingness to serve in the army. "This state [Vermont] appeared to wish for war more than either of the other northern states," wrote William Willys. "It appeared by some public resolutions that the inhabitants only wished for an opportunity to invade Canady, that permission was all they wanted. But now permission is given them, I do not suppose that two thousand in the whole state and perhaps not one thousand can be found ready to realize the encouragement they have given."[37]

"What is to be done with respect to the expedition against Montreal?" Madison inquired of the Secretary of the Treasury. "The enlistments for the regular army fall short of the most moderate calculation; the Volunteer Act is extremely unproductive; and even the militia detachments are either obstructed by the disaffected governors or chilled by the Federal spirit diffused throughout the region most convenient to the theatre. I see nothing better than to draw on this resource as far as the detachments consist of volunteers, who, it may be presumed, will cross the line without raising Constitutional or legal questions."[38]

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[37] Willys to Madison, Aug. 11, 1812. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 46.

[38] Madison to Gallatin, Aug. 8, 1812. *Writings of Albert Gallatin*, I, 524.

The British, meanwhile, were hurrying all available re-enforcements to Upper Canada. By the middle of August "the Canadian outnumbered the American forces at every point of danger on the frontier."[39] August 23, Brock, having captured the American left wing at Detroit, appeared with his prisoners on the Niagara river, ready to repel any assault at the center. Four days previously, General Van Rensselaer of the New York militia had reported that between Buffalo and Niagara he commanded less than a thousand militia. Both the Niagara frontier and the posts on Lake Ontario lay open to the British.[40] Fortunately they were made temporarily secure by an armistice which Sir George Prevost had concluded with Dearborn August 9, and by the hope of the British that by avoiding aggressive action they might yet escape war—the Orders in Council having been repealed June 16.

Thus protected, the Americans were able to bring up re-enforcements. September 1, Dearborn reported that he would shortly have five thousand troops at Plattsburg on Lake Champlain and six thousand at Niagara, each body to be about half regulars and half militia. Upon the arrival at Niagara of the full quota, he predicted that "they will be able I presume to cross over into Canada, carry all the works in Niagara, and proceed to the other posts in that province in triumph."[41]

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[39] Adams, *United States*, VI, 338.
[40] Ibid., VI, 341-342.
[41] Dearborn to Eustis, Sept. 1, 1812. Ibid., VI, 344.

By the middle of October there were over five thousand American troops scattered along the eastern shore of the Niagara river. Unfortunately, the commanders of the two detachments at Buffalo and Queenston, Smyth of the regulars and Van Rensselaer of the New York militia, quarreled before they had even seen each other. Van Rensselaer attempted to cross the river below the falls with part of his force, unsupported by Smyth. After a skirmish in which Brock was killed, the American force was confronted by a superior number of British regulars and pressed toward the river. The militia remaining on the American side refused to cross to foreign soil, the boatmen deserted with their boats, and the detachment of some 900 men which had been thrown across the river, faced with the alternative of surrender or destruction, became prisoners of the British. A month later, Smyth at Buffalo embarking his available force for an attack on Fort Erie, moved them up stream to Black Rock, where "they were ordered to disembark and dine." This, after a series of bombastic proclamations, was Smyth's only effort to conquer Canada.

Within the same week Dearborn, from Plattsburg, had marched his army to the Canadian line, and, when the militia declined to proceed further, had retraced his course to Plattsburg. Winter closed in upon the eastern theater of war.

In the West, meanwhile, the government had entrusted to Governor William Henry Harrison the task of regaining the lost territory and the lost prestige.

Eustis notified him September 17, that he was to have full command of the regulars and volunteers in the Northwest, and of the militia from Ohio and Kentucky, as well as three thousand of the same from Pennsylvania and Virginia—in all a force of 10,000 men. "Having provided for the protection of the western frontier," Harrison was told, "you will retake Detroit, and with a view to the conquest of Upper Canada, you will penetrate that country as far as the force under your command will in your judgment justify."[42] A later letter reminded Harrison of the "solicitude of the government that every thing that can be done shall be done towards recovering the ground lost, and extending successful operations into Canada," but at the same time left it to his judgment to determine "how far it may be practicable to advance, and what posts or station it may be expedient to maintain during the winter."[43]

A few days later Harrison explained to the Secretary of War his plan of campaign. His main force was to advance in three columns to a rendezvous at the rapids of the Maumee; the Pennsylvania and Virginia troops on the right proceeding by way of Upper Sandusky, the Ohio militia in the center following General Hull's track, and the left column, comprising a regiment of regulars and four Kentucky regiments, marching down the Maumee from Fort Defiance. Meanwhile a force

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[42] Eustis to Harrison, Sept. 17, 1812. *Military Book,* VI, 150. (War Dept. MSS.)

[43] Eustis to Harrison, Sept. 23, 1812. Ibid., VI, 161.

of cavalry from Fort Wayne was to cross from the St. Joseph's river to the River Raisin, and instead of attacking Detroit (which it could not have held without infantry support), was to clear of Indians the west shore of the lake and river.[44]

The plan looked well on paper. Harrison at this time apparently expected success. In Ohio, men like Duncan McArthur and Adjutant-General Van Horne talked confidently of retrieving "our lost Character and Territory" and of driving every Englishman from Canada.[45]

But men who were better informed of the infirmities of the government, or of the difficulties of the military situation, were less optimistic. W. H. Crawford wrote Monroe in September that he felt the propriety of wiping off the stigma of Hull's surrender; and yet, he added, "such is my want of confidence in the leaders of our forces & their directors in the cabinet, that I am fearful a continuation of the war, unless it should be for several years, will only add to the number of our defeats." Calhoun expressed similar forebodings. "Our executive officers are most incompetent men," he wrote; "and will let the best of causes I fear perish in their hands. We are literally borne down under the effects of errors and mismanagement. . . . I do be-

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[44] Harrison to Eustis, Sept. 27, 1812. Dawson, *W. H. Harrison*, p. 302.

[45] McArthur to Worthington, Nov. 14, 1812. Van Horne to Worthington, Dec. 9, 1812. *Papers of Thomas Worthington, MSS.*

lieve the executive will have to make a disgraceful peace."[46]

A letter from Franklinton, Ohio, to Thomas Worthington, who with Pope of Kentucky had voted against the war, hinted at a change of sentiment in the West. "I am much pleased to remark," wrote John Kerr, "that the people are now, not near so ready to burn your effigy and that of Mr. Pope, as they were last Summer, consideration is always resumed by the multitude when it is of no great service to them. War is a very pretty thing in theory, how it may terminate in practice is altogether a different consideration."[47]

Meanwhile Harrison and his officers were learning something of the almost insuperable difficulties of an autumn campaign in the northern swamps. Major Hardin, a Kentucky officer with the left column of the army, explained the situation in a letter to Governor Shelby. The state of the western road was such, he said, that no wagon could carry the feed for its own team from Piqua to the rapids—and this road was said to be the best of the three which the army must use. Water carriage was impossible while the enemy commanded the lake. "I therefore deem it impracticable to penetrate Canada from this quarter at this season."

"I know," the letter continued, "that it will be morti-

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[46] Crawford to Monroe, Sept. 9, 1812. *Monroe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. XIII. Calhoun to MacBride, Dec. 25, 1812. *James MacBride Papers, MSS.*, 1808-1817.

[47] Kerr to Worthington, Nov. 23, 1812. *Papers of Thos. Worthington, MSS.*

fying to Kentucky for this army to return without doing any thing—but it is better to do that than to attempt impossibilities. I wish to God the public mind were informed of our difficulties, and gradually prepared for this course. In my opinion, we should in this quarter disband all but those sufficient for a strong frontier guard, and for convoys, etc., and prepare for the next season."[48]

In the face of these difficulties, superimposed upon the disaster at Detroit, it may be questioned whether the West as a whole still looked confidently for the conquest of Canada. Some leading Westerners had lost hope, if we may judge from a significant expression in Harrison's letter of October 22 to the Secretary of War.

"It was suggested to me, a few days ago, by a member of congress," he wrote, "that the possession of Detroit by the enemy would probably be the most effectual bar to the attainment of peace; if this were really the case, I would undertake to recover it, with a detachment of the army, at any time."[49]

The member of Congress referred to was without doubt R. M. Johnson of Kentucky, one of the leading war men. Johnson had started for Washington in August, "by way of Detroit" as he wrote Eustis, wishing to see the battle that was to be fought in the vicinity of Malden. Naturally he got no further than Harri-

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[48] McAfee, *History of the Late War*, p. 168.
[49] Dawson, *W. H. Harrison*, p. 314.

son's army, and Harrison made him the bearer of his "views and arrangements" to Eustis.[50] If Johnson suggested to Harrison that "the possession of Detroit by the enemy would probably be the most effectual bar to the attainment of peace," he obviously meant that the government would be willing to make peace upon the recovery of the lost territory, that is upon the *status quo ante bellum* so far as territory was concerned; and if Johnson could contemplate such a peace—leaving the northwest border as before the war—there must indeed have been a change of sentiment in the West.

Only "some important political reason," in Harrison's judgment, would warrant the attempt to take Detroit by a winter campaign. In the letter above quoted he warned Eustis that, "having in view offensive operations *from Detroit,* an advance of this sort would be premature, and ultimately disadvantageous." In December, when he had had further opportunity to learn the difficulty of his undertaking, he suggested that it might be the part of wisdom to postpone offensive operations until the United States could control Lake Erie. This could be accomplished for a fraction of the sum which would otherwise be expended in the quartermaster's department alone during the winter, and as a result of naval control, "the wishes of the government

[50] Johnson to Eustis, Aug. 23, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* Eustis to Harrison, Nov. 5, 1812. *Military Book,* VI, 222. Eustis wrote: "Your letters of Oct. 22nd & 26th have been received. I have had repeated conversations with the Hon. Mr. Johnson who has communicated more fully your views & arrangements, which are approved."

in their utmost extent, could be accomplished without difficulty in the months of April and May. Malden, Detroit, and Macinaw would fall in rapid succession. On the contrary, all that I can promise to accomplish during the winter, unless the strait should afford us a passage on the ice, is to recover Detroit. I must further observe, that no military man would think of retaining Detroit, Malden being in possession of the enemy, unless his army was at least twice as strong as the disposable force of the enemy." It was plainly Harrison's opinion that unless an immediate success, regardless of cost, were desired for its effect upon peace negotiations, active operations should be deferred until naval control of Lake Erie could be established. If the government wished him to press on, he was ready to do his best, as were the men under his command.[51]

Before this letter had time to reach Washington, Madison had yielded to the pressure of the more vigorous war men and accepted the resignations of his Secretaries of War and Navy. Monroe assumed temporarily the duties of the War Office. His first letter to Harrison did nothing to meet the general's desire for specific instructions. "The object of your expedition," he wrote, "was to retake Detroit, to take Malden, with the adjacent country, and to hold them. . . . The President still considers the occupancy of Detroit & Malden objects of the highest importance." Such oc-

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[51] Harrison to Eustis, Dec. 12, 1812. Dawson, *W. H. Harrison*, pp. 333-4.

cupancy would destroy the British ascendancy over the Indians. General Harrison, however, said Monroe, was in the best position to judge of what was expedient, and the whole question was left to his determination.[52] Three weeks later Monroe instructed Harrison that the President was less anxious to push on the expedition with rapidity than to render permanent any acquisition that might be made, and assured him that the determination had been formed to make every effort to control the lake for the ensuing season.[53]

Harrison, forced against his will to take the responsibility for action or inaction, had already written Monroe of his tentative plans. "My plan of operations has been and now is, to occupy the Miami Rapids, and to deposit there as much provisions as possible, to move from thence with a choice detachment of the army, and with as much provision, artillery, and ammunition as the means of transportation will allow—make a demonstration towards Detroit, and by a sudden passage of the strait upon the ice, an actual investure of Malden. . . . Upon the whole, Sir, my reaching Malden this winter depends upon circumstances which I cannot control—the freezing of the strait in such a manner as to enable me to pass over the troops and artillery." Four days later he assured Monroe that he would neither let trifling difficulties stand in his way, nor on the other hand adopt any measures that did not hold out a fair

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[52] Monroe to Harrison, Dec. 26, 1812. *Military Book*, VI, 256. (War Dept. MSS.)

[53] Monroe to Harrison, Jan. 17, 1813. Ibid., p. 269.

prospect of success, at the same time warning him that a suspension of operations for the winter had long been expected "by most of the well informed men who know the character of the country."[54]

Two weeks later the left wing of the army, under General Winchester, having imprudently advanced to Frenchtown on the River Raisin, was crushed by the British and Indians. Shortly thereafter Harrison gave up all thought of advancing to Malden and for the remainder of the season was hard put to it to retain the ground in his possession. Armstrong had become Secretary of War. March 5 he wrote Harrison that apparently, by the land route, Malden could be approached only in mid-winter or mid-summer. One season was past, and to await the other would be hardly less disastrous than retreat. The best course, therefore, would be to hold the present ground till the lake should open, "and then to approach our object by water, and under convoy of the Vessels of War building at Presq-isle."[55] Thus after vast expense and much loss of life the effort to retrieve Hull's losses and to take western Canada by a land campaign was definitely abandoned. Thereafter all was to turn upon control of Lake Erie by the navy.

We saw that in June, 1812, the administration had not adopted the western view that the annexation of Canada was a measure essential to the peace and safety of the nation. When Westerners like Johnson had

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[54] Harrison to Monroe, Jan. 4, Jan. 8, 1813. Dawson, *W. H. Harrison*, pp. 338-340.

[55] Armstrong to Harrison, Mar. 5, 1813. *Military Book*, VI, 303.

come to the point of waiving that demand, it was not to be expected that the administration should take a stronger tone. "Many of the friends of the Administration," wrote John A. Harper, "believe, that the Executive are not disposed to prosecute the war with vigor, provided they can find any *hole* through which they can creep out and avoid the contest."[56] Confirmation of this opinion, from the standpoint of an annexationist, might have been seen in a passage of the instructions which Monroe submitted to Gallatin, Adams, and Bayard when these envoys set out for Europe in response to the Russian offer of mediation.

"A reciprocal stipulation will be entered into," wrote the Secretary of State, "for the restoration of any territory which either party may have acquired by the War. The probable state of the War at the date of the Treaty will render this stipulation favorable to G. Britain. It ought therefore not only to make her the more acquiescent in our reserving to ourselves the right of excluding her Indian traders from our territory and keeping a superiority of naval force on the Lakes, but the more liberal also on other subjects to be arranged."[57]

From this note and from that of the preceding June to Jonathan Russell, it is apparent that, during the first

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[56] Harper to Plumer, Feb. 6, 1813. *Wm. Plumer Letters, MSS.*, 1809-1815.

[57] Monroe to Gallatin, Adams, and Bayard, Apr. 15, 1813. *Papers of James A. Bayard*, p. 205. This paragraph, like that of similar import in the note of June 26, 1812 (*ante*, pp. 165-6), is omitted from the instructions as printed in *American State Papers*.

period of the war, Monroe was far from proposing the annexation of Canada. In the words of his letter to Colonel Taylor, "it might be necessary to invade Canada, not as an object of the war but as a means to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion." Canada, if conquered, was to be traded off for British concessions on other points. Western interests were not to be entirely disregarded. The commissioners were instructed to insist upon the exclusion of British fur-traders from American territory and on the right of the United States to maintain on the lakes what naval force it chose. But in June, 1812, and April, 1813, the sentiments of northwestern annexationists were entirely disregarded. If a year of military disasters was not sufficient to wreck the chances of annexation, the attitude of the administration was enough to make up the deficiency.

CHAPTER V

Florida: To Have But Not To Hold

Upon the southern frontier, there was no doubt of the serious purposes of the administration. Madison and Monroe, as was shown in an earlier chapter, had no intention of surrendering lightly the Spanish territory which General Mathews had occupied; and the instructions to Governor Mitchell, requiring an amnesty for the insurgents as a necessary preliminary to withdrawing the American troops, made it easy for an ingenious official to find pretexts for continuing the occupation.

Upon first accepting his commission, Mitchell apparently expected to withdraw the troops from Florida. He wrote Monroe from St. Mary's, May 2, that he should at once "endeavor to terminate the unpleasant business in which the United States have been made a party by the indiscreet zeal of their Commissioner."[1] Two days later he dispatched a letter to Governor Estrada at St. Augustine, informing him that the recent transactions were not authorized by the government and assuring him of "the friendly disposition of the govern-

[1] *State Dept. MSS.*, Division of Publications.

ment of the United States to that of Spain," but saying nothing of any measures for withdrawing the troops. This omission, he explained to Monroe, "was to afford time to receive your answer to my last letter, in which I expect your directions as to the course I shall pursue in case the Spanish are unable to leave St. Augustine to reoccupy those places now in possession of the American troops." Mitchell's note brought an indignant reply from Estrada. He had seen in the public papers of the United States the announcement of the government's disapprobation of the conduct of its agent, and had supposed "that the United States troops would have been withdrawn ere now:—*until that takes place*, I can hold no treaty," and, he added, he could not be held responsible for any unpleasant occurrences in the meantime.[2]

Mitchell wrote Monroe that he was preparing to send his aide-de-camp again to St. Augustine with a promise to withdraw the troops upon receiving the required assurances as to the safety of the "patriots," but he added: "That such assurances will not be given I have some reason to believe." It is evident that by the middle of May Mitchell was seeking an excuse for keeping the troops in Florida. "The province," he wrote, "may justly be said to be in a complete state of civil war, anarchy, and confusion, and may have an unfortunate tendency to promote mischief in Georgia."

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[2] Mitchell to Estrada, May 4, 1812. Mitchell to Monroe, May 16, 1812. Estrada to Mitchell, May 9, 1812. Ibid.

In summarizing his work several months later, he explained that, although he had opened his mission with a belief that the government was in honor bound to withdraw the troops, he had very early seen the obstacle to such a course which lay in the difficulty of obtaining security for the "safety of the lives and property of those who had embarked in the revolution under the fullest assurance that they would meet the support of the United States." In fact, the only security which Mitchell considered adequate was the cession of Amelia island and all the territory north and west of the St. John's; this he did not expect, nor was he sure the President would so construe the existing law as to accept a part of the province. The Spanish obligingly supplied him with an excuse to keep the troops where they were. "When in this dilemma," he wrote, "the bad conduct of the Spaniards came to my relief in the attack made upon Colonel Smith's camp, at the very moment when I was giving them frank and candid assurances of the friendly sentiments of our Government, and of their wish to restore matters to their original standing."[3]

The "patriots" or the American troops—it is not quite clear which—in their effort to cut off supplies from St. Augustine, had seized and partially fortified a block house upon the shore of Moosa creek, commanding one of the water approaches to the city. The Spaniards, on the 15th or 16th of May, advanced

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[3] Mitchell to Monroe, May 16, Sept. 19, 1812. Ibid.

against this position with an armed schooner and four armed launches. Under cover of the schooner's guns the launches landed a small force of troops who succeeded in burning the house. After this success, according to the report of the American commander, the Spaniards directed their fire at the American flag, "the balls passing in every direction through our camp," Smith thereupon moved his camp to a point a mile and a half distant, out of reach of the Spanish guns.[4]

This was "the bad conduct of the Spaniards" which came to Mitchell's "relief" and enabled him to break off negotiations for the withdrawal of the American troops. "From that moment," he wrote, "I ceased to communicate with the person then in authority in Augustine, because I believed it to be a gross insult offered to the honor and integrity of our government." In June Kindelan replaced Estrada as governor at St. Augustine. On the 11th he sent Mitchell an ultimatum, demanding that the troops be withdrawn within eleven days and threatening "disagreeable measures" otherwise. Mitchell replied that the troops would not be withdrawn, or any proposal made for their withdrawal, "until such explanation is given for the attack made upon them as will evince the sincerity of the desire you express of seeing the harmony of the two countries preserved, and be consistent with the honor of the United States to receive," and he warned the Spanish governor that force would be met with force. In later communications he

[4] Lt. Col. T. A. Smith to Mitchell, May 16, 1812. Ibid.

refused to accept Kindelan's statement that the attack had been intended solely against the insurgents, not against the American troops, and as if in fear that this excuse might fail him, he brought in another grievance —the employment by the Spanish of negro troops. "Your certain knowledge of the peculiar situation of the southern section of the Union in regard to that description of people, one might have supposed, would have induced you to abstain from introducing them into the province, or from organizing such as were already in it. . . . I may venture to assure you that the United States will never tolerate their remaining in the province."[5]

In order to understand Mitchell's policy—his seizure of every pretext that might help to justify the retention of the troops in Florida—it is necessary to remember that Congress was expected to legalize the occupation, and that it was of importance to hold the ground seized until a stronger and more regular army of occupation could be sent.[6] It will be recalled from an earlier chapter that the Federalists and the President's enemies in the Senate had defeated the bill authorizing the occu-

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[5] Mitchell to Monroe, Sept. 19, 1812. Kindelan to Mitchell, June 11, 1812. Mitchell to Kindelan, June 16, 1812. Kindelan to Mitchell, June 23, 1812. Mitchell to Kindelan, July 6, 1812. Ibid. The first, fourth, and fifth of these letters are printed in *American State Papers* (1st series), IX, pp. 163, 192, and 194 respectively. Kindelan's letters are in translation.

[6] That this was Mitchell's reasoning is made clear in a letter which he wrote to Monroe on July 17. "By letters which I have received from members of the State delegation in Congress," he wrote, "I have been induced to believe that an act

pation of East Florida. The final vote was taken July 3. Three days later Monroe wrote Mitchell that the President thought it advisable to withdraw the troops. The object was not to be considered as abandoned, he said, and it was likely that at the next session Congress might reverse its decision; but in the meantime it would not be proper for the troops to remain in Florida in the absence of means and authority to take possession of the entire province. Mitchell was instructed to make the best possible terms for the "patriots."[7]

These instructions were in direct conflict with Mitchell's views. He wrote Monroe that he had learned with "surprise and mortification" of the fate of the Florida measure in the Senate. He protested against the withdrawal of the troops as a measure fraught with great danger to the southern states,[8] and added that, instead of ordering Smith to withdraw, he had sent

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would have passed as soon as war was declared, authorizing the President to take possession of the posts yet occupied by the Spaniards in the two Floridas; and by some expressions in your communications, these expectations were confirmed. Under these impressions I have remained here [at St. Mary's], making every preparation for that event." *Am. State Papers* (1st series), IX, 164.

[7] Monroe to Mitchell, July 6, 1812. Ibid., IX, 161.

[8] Above, note 6. "I feel that it is a duty that I owe to the United States, and Georgia in particular," Mitchell wrote, "to assure you that the situation of the garrison of St. Augustine will not admit of the troops being withdrawn. They have armed every able-bodied negro within their power, and they have also received from the Havana a reinforcement of nearly two companies of black troops!...and it is my

him such re-enforcements as he thought "necessary to enable him to maintain his ground, and to prepare him either to meet any reinforcements which might be received by the Spaniards, or to take possession [of St. Augustine] if ordered."

Confronted with this determined statement from Mitchell, Monroe made no attempt to press his instructions of July 6, but let the Georgia executive have his way. At the same time he resorted anew to diplomacy, opening negotiations through the Spanish consul at Alexandria with the Chevalier De Onis, the unrecognized minister of Spain, in the hope of obtaining East Florida by a peaceful cession. De Onis lent encouragement to the plan, writing Monroe that upon his arrival in the United States he had had full powers to treat on indemnities and to conclude a boundary treaty. Those powers he had received from the former government of Spain, but the new government, representing Ferdinand VII, had sent him credentials, and he believed that upon hearing that the United States had shown a friendly disposition toward Spain, it would entrust him with the same powers as had the former gov-

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settled opinion that if they are suffered to remain in the province, our southern country will soon be in a state of insurrection....

"These may be considerations of little import in the opinion of those gentlemen of the Senate who voted against the bill, but they are of vital interest to every man in the southern states, and will, I am confident, be so considered by the President, and met with energy."

ernment. At the President's wish, he said, he would be glad to come to Washington to open negotiations.[9]

Senator Crawford, to whom Monroe appealed for advice, favored the plan, despite the inconsistency involved in accepting the cession from a minister whom the government had hitherto refused to recognize. He stated his opinion in a letter of September 9: "If the Chevalier has the disposition, & the power to cede the country, if he would cause the Spanish governor to perform the official act of cession, it would come within the letter of the law of 1811, & would compel our malcontents in the Senate to support it, & would avoid all offence to Napoleon. Indeed, if the Chevalier is desirous of ceding it & can induce the governor of those provinces to deliver them to the U. S. as an indemnity for Spanish spoliations or in trust for that purpose, or upon any other consideration, whether he has the power to cede or not, I should be glad to receive it."[10]

Crawford, as the letter quoted shows, believed the occupation of all Florida imperatively necessary. In a letter a month earlier he had argued that, whatever the propriety of disavowing Mathews's proceedings, there were good reasons why a cession from the "patriots" as the local authorities might now be accepted. By

[9] De Onis to Monroe, Aug. 29, 1812. *Spanish Legation,* II. (State Dept. MSS.) De Onis in his *Memoir,* published in 1820, says nothing of these negotiations. He makes brief mention of the attack on Amelia island (pp. 18, 21) and expresses the belief that the U. S. government continues to plan for the annexation of Mexico, Canada, etc. (pp. 123-126).

[10] Crawford to Monroe, Sept. 9, 1812. *Monroe Papers, MSS.,* Vol. XIII.

forming a constitution and organizing themselves pursuant to it, his argument ran, the patriots had actually constituted themselves a government to which the term "local authority" might very properly be applied; and from them in this capacity the United States might now properly receive the cession of the province. "Public opinion is very high on this subject in this State," he added. "Much dissatisfaction will prevail if the troops are withdrawn, the country given up, & the patriots abandoned."[11]

Crawford wrote immediately after a two-days conference with General Mathews, "directly from Augustine." From him he derived his information about the new government of the patriots. It is probable that his letter was so timed as to re-enforce a strong appeal which McIntosh addressed to Monroe July 30, and which must have reached him at about the same time as Crawford's. Perhaps Mathews, who was on his way to Washington when he died a few days after this at Augusta, expected to arrive at the same time as the two letters and add the force of his argument to the appeals of McIntosh and Crawford for the acceptance of East Florida from the patriots.

McIntosh wrote in the capacity of Director of East Florida, to which office he had been elected under the new constitution, a copy of which he enclosed. He related the history of the revolution in the province and the grounds on which the patriots had counted upon

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[11] Crawford to Monroe, Aug. 6, 1812. Ibid., Vol. XIII.

support from the United States. He told of the formation of the new constitution, but asserted that "not a man among us but considers this as a thing of a moment, for without the aid of the United States, we must fall and become a ruined and dispersed people." He returned to the theme of the responsibility of the United States government for the misfortunes of the patriots. They had been told, he said, "through official and semi-official channels, 'that not a hair of our head should be touched.'" They had learned, therefore, "with inexpressible anguish," that the gunboats and troops of the United States were to be removed, and they petitioned that enough of each might be left to secure their safety until the cession should be accepted or some act of the British compel the United States to take decisive action.

"Upon the principles of justice and humanity," so the letter closed, "we call for the protection of the United States. With it, we become free and happy, without it we must become wanderers upon the face of the Earth; or tenants of loathsome dungeons, the sport of cruel and inexorable tyrants."[12]

There were inaccuracies of statement in McIntosh's letter, but the portions of it which held the United States responsible for the revolution and its consequences could hardly be answered. The account of the new government was less impressive, and although Crawford had taken it seriously and argued for recog-

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[12] McIntosh to Monroe, July 30, 1812. *State Dept. MSS.*, Div. of Pubs.

nition, and the Georgia press in part followed suit,[13] Madison and Monroe evidently thought the patriot government not substantially changed by the longevity of a few months or the adoption of a new constitution. There is no record of a reply to McIntosh. Monroe took up the negotiations with De Onis, relapsing meanwhile, toward his agent on the border, into a silence like that which had seemed to Mathews the equivalent of a *carte blanche.*

The quiescence of the administration threw the management of affairs on the Florida border wholly into the hands of Governor Mitchell. Under his direction they took a course which in more settled times must have speedily led to war between the United States and Spain. The insurgents had scornfully repelled any suggestion of yielding and had pledged their honor to remain in arms until independence should be won, promising to pay all volunteers who joined them in land or property taken from the enemy.[14] They remained in camp before St. Augustine, and with them remained Lieutenant Colonel Smith and his detachment of United States riflemen. The force was weak, even with both contingents, and early in June Mitchell en-

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[13] Georgia *Argus,* Washington (Georgia) *Monitor,* quoted in Niles' *Register,* III, 16 (Sept. 5, 1812). This propaganda was further reenforced by a petition of citizens of Green Co., Georgia, Aug. 13, 1812, which dwelt upon the danger of East Florida's being occupied by the British and urged the Federal government to take entire possession. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 38, State Dept. MSS.

[14] Fuller, *The Purchase of Florida,* p. 197.

listed the support of a hundred or more men from Savannah—the Savannah Volunteer Guards and the Republican Blues. These embarked from Savannah escorted by one of Campbell's gunboats and were soon before St. Augustine. The adjutant-general of Georgia, Colonel Daniel Newnan, received orders from Mitchell to secure further volunteers from Dublin. The men thus enlisted were to serve for periods of but sixty days, but it was hoped that by a succession of such calls the nceessary number of men might be kept in service as long as their presence should be required.[15]

About the middle of June Smith became alarmed at the arrival in St. Augustine of a detachment of negro troops from Havana and at a report that the Spaniards were arming two large schooners for the purpose of entering the St. John's river and so cutting the communications between the American camp and its base at St. Mary's. Smith made known the danger to Mitchell, and Mitchell called upon Captain Campbell for further naval support. Campbell promptly ordered four gunboats into the St. John's, with orders to keep constantly together, to repel any attack that might be made upon them, to render every possible assistance to Smith, and to protect the inhabitants on the St. John's from any marauding expedition the Spanish might send out. The threatened naval attack from St. Augustine did not take place, and the St. John's river continued

[15] Ibid., p. 197. *Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger*, June 16, June 23, 1812. Mitchell to Campbell, June 3, 1812. *Captains' Letters*, 1812, Vol. II. (Navy. Dept. MSS.)

throughout the occupation under the control of the American gunboats.[16]

A danger that had been recognized from the outset was that the Florida Indians might take the Spanish side. An Indian uprising might lay waste the undefended plantations of the insurgents, endanger Smith's communications between the camp and the St. John's, and even threaten danger to the border settlements in Georgia. To prevent such a disaster, General Mathews, before leaving Florida, had called together some twenty-seven chiefs of the Alachua Indians and held a "talk" with them at Forbes's store at Picolata. Mathews told them that this was a white men's quarrel, in which their interference was not wanted, and sent them away with a present and a threat of dire punishment if they disregarded his advice. The Indians were not cordial, but they promised to keep peace.[17]

The course of the Americans and the patriots was not of a nature to keep the Indians friendly. Governor Garzia (who temporarily relieved Kindelan at St. Augustine) later described to Governor Mitchell the treatment the Indians had received. "Gen. Mathews told Paine [an Alachua chief] . . . that he intended to drive him from his land. McIntosh sent a message to Bowlegs, another Indian chief, that he intended to make him as a waiting man; the Florida convention parti-

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[16] Mitchell to Campbell, June 23, 1812. Campbell to Hamilton, June 27, 1812, Aug. 1, 1812. *Captains' Letters*, 1812, II. Campbell to Hamilton, Mar. 6, 1813. Ibid., 1813, II.

[17] *Senate Misc. Doc.* No. 55, 36 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 21-24.

tioned their lands amongst the volunteers . . . the Indian trade was destroyed by you and your friends, and they found that, from the same cause, they were to be deprived of their annual presents."[18]

Under such conditions the Indians needed little persuasion to rise against the invaders. To the Spanish at St. Augustine the temptation to make use of such valuable allies was irresistible. Although they still had access to the sea, they received little succor by water, and the besieging force watched so closely the land approaches to the city that the garrison soon was almost at the point of famine, the soldiers, according to one report, being reduced to a ration of one pint of corn daily. At the very beginning of the American occupation the Spanish governor had turned to the Indians for aid. Toward the last of July he succeeded in establishing communications with them and winning them to the Spanish side.[19] On July 25 the Indians opened hostilities with an attack upon the plantations along the St. John's river, in the rear of Smith's position. Within a week they killed eight or nine settlers and carried off a large number of slaves. Many of the patriots left the encampment to protect their endangered homes. August 21 Smith reported that the Indians committed depredations in his rear almost daily, burning and destroying improvements on the plantations, and compelling many of the inhabitants to flee to the islands

[18] Garzia to Mitchell, Dec. 12, 1812. Niles' *Register*, III, 311.
[19] Kindelan to Apodaca, July 29, 1812. *East Fla. Papers, To the Captain General*, 1812 July-Dec.

for safety, "reduced in a few hours from affluence to almost beggary."[20]

Smith proposed to end the peril by carrying the war into the Indian country. "My orders warrant my attacking them [the Indians] in their towns or elsewhere," he wrote General Pinckney, "for which event I am preparing; the moment arms are recd. I will dispatch Major Newnan with 250 Volunteers with orders to destroy all their settlements within 100 miles of the St. John's. The safety of our frontier I conceive requires this course."[21] Newnan arrived on the St. John's about August 15, with 250 volunteers from Georgia. He reported to Colonel Smith at the encampment before St. Augustine, and received orders, dated August 21, to proceed immediately against the hostile Indians in East Florida "and destroy their towns, provisions, and settlements." Difficulty in procuring horses and provisions, and the ravages of malaria in Newnan's force, delayed the time of departure for several weeks. September 7 Smith reported that the volunteers had taken

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[20] Testimony of Zephaniah Kingsley, above, p. 201, note 17. Smith to Pinckney, July 30, 1812 (copy), inclosed in Pinckney to Eustis, Aug. 29, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* Smith to the Adjutant-General, Aug. 21, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* (Old Files Section.) Smith had been commissioned colonel July 6, 1812. (*Am. State Papers, Mil. Aff.*, I, 408.) During the war he became a brigadier general. Major Laval, placed under arrest in March, was released over a month later. He served through the war as a major, and was later dropped from the army roll and given a position as military storekeeper. There can be little doubt which officer had acted more in accord with the wishes of the government.

[21] Smith to Pinckney, July 30, 1812. See preceding note.

up quarters twenty-eight miles in his rear, where "the only service which they have rendered is (from their situation) preventing the Indians from cutting off my communications with St. John's." The time of service of the volunteers would expire September 29, and Smith feared that, having allowed so much time to pass, Newnan would not now undertake the expedition at all.[22]

Smith's situation had by this time become so serious as to occasion much alarm to his superior officers, Brigadier General Flournoy and Major General Pinckney. In his letter to Flournoy of September 7, Smith had pointed out that his position before St. Augustine was becoming untenable. Despite the presence of Newnan and his volunteers, Smith found it necessary to send a strong escort with his supply wagons between the camp and the supply depot at Davis's creek. Upon Newnan's departure it would be necessary to use half his force for that purpose. "Think, Sir, of the situation in which my detachment will be placed, when one-half must be sent as an escort for provisions. I shall then have 60 or 70 men to oppose 7 or 800." Smith feared it was already too late to send him aid. "If I cannot maintain this post, which is entrenched, it will be extremely difficult to make a good retreat in the face of an enemy, so far superior in numbers. If a blow is struck, it will be instantaneous. . . . I must repeat

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[22] Newnan's Report, Niles' *Register*, III, 235. Smith to Flournoy, Sept. 7, 1812. Copy enclosed in Pinckney to Eustis, Oct. 1, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*

that if I am to apply for support, after being compelled to retire from my present position, it will be too late."

General Flournoy, at Bath, Georgia, did not receive Smith's letter until September 21. He then wrote Newnan to keep his volunteers together if possible until they could be relieved by a militia detachment, while he himself set out the following day for Milledgeville to urge the governor to send at once a competent force of militia to the border. Mitchell had left St. Mary's at the end of July.[23] Since that time, it appears, Smith had been left to shift largely for himself, not knowing whether to depend upon Mitchell or the United States army for support. Pinckney, in June, had asked that a part of the Georgia militia be sent to St. Mary's to be ready in case of emergency, but so far not a militia company had been moved, Mitchell preferring to depend upon the intermittent service of volunteers. While Flournoy was complaining to Pinckney of this failure, Mitchell was urging upon Monroe that the United States recruits in the state be used to replace the volunteers whose terms were about to expire. Both Mitchell and Flournoy complained of the non-committal policy of the Washington government. Mitchell had never received a word, he said, on the subject of re-enforcing Smith, though he had given explicit information on the necessity of such a step. "I have therefore been perfectly in the dark as to the sentiments of the President upon that point." Flournoy wrote Pinck-

[23] Campbell to Hamilton, Aug. 1, 1812. *Captains' Letters,* 1812, Vol. II.

ney that, even had he a competent force of regulars at his disposal, he would fear incurring governmental displeasure by marching them into Florida, and that if he secured the Georgia militia he would fear, for the same reason, to use them offensively against the Spanish.[24]

The report of Smith's perilous situation spurred both Pinckney and Mitchell into sudden activity. Pinckney at once instructed Flournoy to use the militia energetically if he could obtain them and if they would "consent to proceed into Florida"; otherwise, Colonel Jack at Savannah was to march at once for St. Mary's with such regular recruits as might have been collected, and with the aid of Captain Campbell, to proceed to Smith's encampment and make himself subject to Smith's orders—"but he is not without further orders to act offensively against St. Augustine." Pinckney forwarded copies of his correspondence to the Secretary of War, with the hope that the measures he had resolved upon would not be considered an interference with the mission entrusted to Governor Mitchell (whose recent illness, Pinckney suggested, had perhaps caused him to lose touch with affairs in Florida), or an unwarranted encroachment upon neutral territory. A week later he

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[24] Flournoy to Pinckney, Sept. 21, 1812. Pinckney to Flournoy, Sept. 24, 1812. Copies enclosed in Pinckney to Eustis, Oct. 1, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* Mitchell to Monroe, Sept. 19, 1812. *Am. State Papers* (1st series), IX, 168. Mitchell expressed the hope that the President would not give any peremptory orders to withdraw the troops, "but that he will let us gain a little time, and probably some circumstance may arise out of our present situation that will bring us relief."

reported information that "General Flournoy had succeeded in his endeavour to procure an order for the immediate march of the Regiment of Georgia Militia, for which I made requisition 3 months and 1 day previous to the date of it."[25]

Four weeks after Smith had written Flournoy of his desperate situation, the Secretary of War remembered —officially for the first time since June 26—that Smith's situation might need attention. By information indirectly received, Eustis wrote Pinckney, October 4, it was feared that Smith's situation might become critical. "I am directed by the President to request your attention to the detachment under Lt. Col. Smith, and that you will order him to be reinforced." Pinckney was also instructed to order a detachment of recruits to Point Petre, where they might be available for service in Florida.[26]

While his superiors were debating what should be done to save him, the crisis in Smith's affairs had come and gone. September 12, while a train of provision wagons, escorted by Captain Williams of the Marine Corps with twenty men, was making its way from Davis's creek to the camp, it was suddenly attacked, between 8 and 9 p. m., by a party of fifty Indians and negroes. Captain Williams was wounded, fatally as it

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[25] Pinckney to Eustis, Oct. 1, Oct. 8, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* Pinckney to Flournoy, Oct. 1, 1812. Pinckney to Campbell, Oct. 1, 1812. Copies enclosed in Pinckney to Eustis, Oct. 1, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*

[26] Eustis to Pinckney, Oct. 4, 1812. *Military Book,* VI, 182. (War Dept. MSS.)

turned out, the one sergeant in the command was killed, six of the privates wounded, and the wagons and provisions lost. Smith sent at once to Colonel Newnan for assistance, and with the aid of 130 men and twenty-five horses from the volunteer force, succeeded in retreating unmolested, with half his command ill, to the depot on Davis's creek twenty miles from St. Augustine, where he was within reach of the gunboats and had no further need to worry about his communications. Thus ingloriously ended the siege of St. Augustine.[27]

When Newnan had assisted Smith's detachment to a place of safety on the St. John's, the volunteers under his command had less than a week to serve. As this was less time than would probably be required for the expedition against the Indians, Newnan, at Smith's suggestion, called for volunteers who would agree to serve for as long a time as such an expedition should require. Eighty-four of his 250 men agreed to follow him; Smith sent twenty-three militiamen and nine patriots. With a force of 116 men, twelve horses, and food for four days, Newnan set off to destroy the Alachua towns. The attempt was courageous but ill-conceived —the force too small, the distance too great, and the provisions insufficient. On the fourth day out, when nearing the Alachua settlements, the little party encountered a band of Indians and Negroes, who fled at their

[27] Smith to the Adjutant-General, Sept. 22, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* (Old Files Section.) Newnan's Report, Niles' *Register*, III, 235.

charge but took refuge in a swamp whence they could not be dislodged. Unable to advance and unwilling to retreat, Newnan entrenched himself near the scene of the encounter and sent a messenger for re-enforcements. For a week the party lived in the stockade, subsisting on horse meat. Finally, threatened with desertion by one of the companies of his command, Newnan attempted a night retreat, carrying his wounded on stretchers. The same night a relief party of twenty-five horsemen with provisions reached the stockade by another route, and finding it deserted, returned to the St. John's. Newnan's party, sick, discouraged, and mutinous, struggled afoot for several days through the wilderness, "living upon gophers, alligators, and palmetto stocks," and subject to intermittent attacks from the Indians. At length, with the aid of a second relief party, they reached the St. John's with all their sick and wounded, and were conveyed by a gunboat to Colonel Smith's camp. The punitive expedition had degenerated into a desperate retreat. Newnan estimated that he had killed or wounded fifty of the enemy; his own losses had been about half this number. He had not come within sight of an Indian town or supply depot.[28]

The Georgia militia that had been called out to go to Smith's relief, Governor Mitchell hoped to use to good purpose. He wrote Smith, October 13:

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[28] Newnan to Mitchell, Oct. 19, 1812. Niles' *Register*, III, 235-237.

"I have in a former letter intimated to you the disposition which I thought you had better make of five of the companies now on their march to be under your command, but if your prospects are flattering at any time of being able to take Augustine and they will volunteer, as I have no doubt they will, I would advise you to carry the whole on for that purpose. . . . You may rest assured that I shall not recall you, and if the general Government issue any peremptory order to that effect, they must find some one else to execute it, for I never will, believing as I do that it would be disgraceful to do so under the existing circumstances. No! satisfaction must be had for the blood already spilt, and that satisfaction must be taken at the point of the bayonet."[29]

It is plain that Mitchell, in so advising Smith, was exceeding his instructions, which authorized him to employ force against the Spaniards only in case the British attempted to occupy East Florida. The tone of his letter was in keeping with the growing feeling in the state that the conditions existing in Florida were a menace to the peace and safety of Georgia, and that either the United States or Georgia herself should promptly put an end to the anarchy across the border.

The Federal government, however, was not yet ready to resort to force; the negotiations with De Onis were

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[29] Mitchell to Smith, Oct. 13, 1812. Copy enclosed in Pinckney to Monroe, Nov. 24, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.*

still dragging on, and Monroe still hoped to obtain peaceable possession of the province. As it happened, on the same day on which Mitchell was writing his belligerent letter to Smith, Monroe was transferring Mitchell's powers to General Pinckney. The only reason for the change, apparently, was the wish to secure better coordination of the work on the border, for Monroe assured Mitchell that his conduct of his mission had "the entire approbation and the thanks of the President." The independent course which the Georgia governor seemed on the point of taking was not yet known in Washington; but the recent predicament of Colonel Smith had shown the danger of divided authority. Henceforth military and diplomatic affairs on the Florida border would be in the same hands.[30]

The determination of the people of Georgia to drive the Spanish from Florida and crush the hostile Indians was revealed when the legislature convened early in November. Governor Mitchell, in his message, reviewed the course of events in East Florida since the outbreak of the revolution. He had hoped, he said, from the part played by General Mathews, that the government had resolved upon the occupation of the entire province, and upon the declaration of war against Great Britain he had again looked forward to such ac-

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[30] Monroe to Pinckney, Nov. 3, 1812. *Am. State Papers,* (1st series), IX, 188. Monroe to Mitchell, Oct. 12, 1812. Ibid., IX, 172.

tion, "knowing as I did, and still do, that the interests of Georgia would be effectually promoted by that event, and the views and wishes of the general government at the same time accomplished."

"The Senate of the United States, however," the message continued, "in their wisdom had different views of the subject, and the matter was permitted to remain as before the war. It is nevertheless my sincere and candid opinion, that the peace and safety of this state will be hazarded, if the occupancy of East Florida, by our government, is relinquished or much longer delayed." Mitchell then referred to the employment of negro troops and Indian allies by the Spanish. "The present force in Augustine is of a description which we cannot tolerate, and the mode of warfare which the governor of that place has commenced, is so savage and barbarous, that it is impossible for an American to hear it without feeling the utmost indignation and resentment against the power who commands or even permits it. I recommend this subject in an especial manner to your most serious consideration, as involving, not only your immediate interest, but your future peace and happiness."

Mitchell expressed his entire confidence "in the disposition of the president to proceed in the business with the utmost decision, if he is authorized by congress." Evidently he had little faith that Congress would grant the authorization; and while he did not explicitly recommend independent action by Georgia, the suggestion of

such action could be read between the lines of his message.[31]

The Georgia legislature gave prompt attention to the governor's message. November 20 a joint committee reported that in their opinion "immediate and decisive measures must be adopted by the general or state government, for the possession and occupancy" of East Florida. The report reviewed the various dangers arising from the province's being in the hands of an ally of Great Britain, and then, after examining the clause in the Federal Constitution forbidding a state to make war unless actually invaded, concluded that under existing conditions "the state is constitutionally invested with the power immediately to organize a sufficient force to march into the province of East Florida, and to occupy it; the occupation to be relinquished by the state troops as soon as the national legislature shall have adopted efficient measures to relieve the people from the imminent danger with which they are now men-

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[31] Niles' *Register,* III, 193-195. (Nov. 28, 1812.) Georgia newspapers were already recommending independent state action. The *Georgia Journal,* mentioning a report that British troops were on their way to Florida and voicing great alarm at the Indian peril, declared: "Under existing circumstances, the reduction of Augustine, as we have before repeatedly stated, is essential to our safety.... Promptness is all important. Government having turned a deaf ear to our calls for assistance, we ought to look to ourselves for protection. The energies of this state must be exerted to ward off the blow which impends over us, be the consequences what they may." *Georgia Journal,* Oct. 7, 1812, quoted in *National Intelligencer,* Oct. 20, 1812.

aced."[32] A bill, promptly reported from committee, would have empowered the governor to organize a body of militia sufficient to take St. Augustine and chastise the Indians and to employ it at his discretion for those purposes and for the occupation of the province.[33] The terms of the proposed law were more radical than was deemed prudent. The bill was laid aside and two joint resolutions were adopted in its stead. One of these (December 9, 1812) authorized the use of volunteer cavalry to patrol the borders and "to chastise the violent aggressions already committed by the Indians on our borders, or which may hereafter be committed by them," and empowered the governor, if he thought it necessary, to employ the same force "in cooperation with any forces which the General Government may hereafter send to East Florida, for the reduction of that province." The other measure (November 21) was a memorial to Congress, instructing that body that it was "highly expedient, nay, indispensably necessary," that the President be empowered "to take immediate possession of the province of East Florida." The memorial then recited the various perils arising from leaving the province in Spanish hands, and closed with a plain warning to Congress that neglect to provide for the needs of the southern border would surely drive the Georgians "to resort to those means which God and nature has [sic] placed within their reach, to demand

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[32] Niles' *Register,* III, 259.
[33] Charleston *Courier,* Nov. 27, 1812.

that justice from their insolent oppressors, which the duty they owe to themselves, their country and posterity requires at their hands."[34]

The administration in Washington probably welcomed the aggressive attitude assumed by Georgia for the effect it might have upon Congress. The *National Intelligencer* of November 21 called Mitchell's message "a valuable and well-penned document," and added: "We believe the opinion is becoming very prevalent, that the safety of the Southern frontier, as well as every motive of general policy, require that East Florida should be added to our territorial possessions."

But for the moment the government still clung to the hope of gaining its end by diplomacy. Monroe advised a committee of the House of Representatives against a renewed attempt to pass a law authorizing the President to occupy East Florida.[35] To Pinckney, who had

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[34] *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, November and December, 1812.* pp. 133-137, 142-143. H. B. Fuller (*The Purchase of Florida,* pp. 197-198) states that a bill like that mentioned in the Charleston *Courier* (note 33 above) actually passed the legislature. There is no record of it among the statutes passed at this session.

[35] "A few days since," wrote John A. Harper to William Plumer, Dec. 1, 1812, "the sub-committee of the Committee of Foreign Relations on the part of the House, waited upon the Secretary of State, in order to ascertain the views of the government in regard to East Florida. Mr. Monroe informed us that there had been an informal correspondence between him and the Spanish Consul at Alexandria on the subject, and that the Consul had communicated the views of D'Onis and his government, and as there was a strong probability that the territory would be ceded to us by the local government (Ferdinand) we were advised *not* to bring

written to enquire whether the government really contemplated an attack on St. Augustine,[36] Monroe explained the two conditions under which the existing law authorized the occupation of the province. "With the local authorities," he wrote, "an amicable arrangement only has been contemplated, which implies, of course, an amicable negotiation. Force, with them, could not be resorted to, except on the contingency above mentioned," that is, "an attempt to occupy it by a foreign power."[37]

As Monroe had within a few days expressed a belief that "the British would not make any attempt upon any part of Florida," these instructions apparently meant that there would be no use of force against St.

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forward a proposition at present to authorize this government to take possession of it... He said, and he appeared to speak with confidence, that the British *would not make any attempt* upon any part of Florida..." *William Plumer Letters, MSS.*, 1809-1815, p. 481.

[36] Pinckney had been disturbed at learning that Governor Mitchell had authorized Smith to attack St. Augustine, and had forwarded to Monroe a copy of Mitchell's letter to Smith, together with a request for "explicit instruction on the point of offensive operations and particularly of making an attack upon St. Augustine." To the Secretary of War he wrote that "it did not appear to me that the Governor's direction to Col. Smith was justified by the instructions which have since been transferred to me.... If it should be the intention of the President that the attempt to occupy St. Augustine should be made," he added, "preparations ought immediately to be commenced for that purpose." Pinckney to Monroe, Nov. 24, 1812. Pinckney to Eustis, Nov. 26, 1812. Both letters in *War Dept. MSS.*

[37] Note 35 above. Monroe to Pinckney, Dec. 8, 1812. *Am. State Papers* (1st series), IX, 188.

Augustine. But even before these instructions were written there had been a change of policy. On December 10, Senator Anderson of Tennessee, one of the best friends of the administration in the Senate, moved in secret session that a committee be appointed to consider the expediency of authorizing the President "to occupy and hold the whole or any part of East Florida, including Amelia Island, and also those parts of West Florida which are not now in the possession and under the jurisdiction of the United States."[38] The motion was passed December 22, and a committee appointed.

Meanwhile, a week or more previous to Monroe's rather pacific instructions to Pinckney, the Secretary of War had written him in a different style. By an order of November 27, Pinckney was directed to concentrate at Point Petre all the available force under his command south of Virginia, "as the services of these troops will probably be required in that quarter." Five days later Secretary Eustis wrote again: "I am commanded by the President to inform you that Colonel Smith is to retain his position on the River St. John's; that he is to be reinforced; that the Seminoles who have committed murders and depredations on our citizens are to be subdued; and that a force is also to be embodied, as ordered by my letter of the 27th of November, for offensive operations, preparatory to the entire possession of the Province of East Florida."[39]

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[38] *Annals of Congress,* 12 Cong., 2 sess., p. 124.

[39] Eustis to Pinckney, Nov. 27, Dec. 2, 1812. *Military Book* (War Dept. MSS.), VI, 237, 242.

Pinckney replied that if, as appeared from his new instructions, "the capture of the Castle of St. Mark's at St. Augustine must be in contemplation," it would be necessary to remember that this was "a regular fortification with a good ditch," which could not be reduced without heavy ordnance. He urged the necessity, because of the climate, of hastening preparations so as to complete the campaign before June, and closed with a plea for "early information of the intentions of Government." Monroe, the temporary incumbent of the war office after Eustis's resignation, assured the general that "it is intended to place under your command an adequate force for the reduction of St. Augustine, should it be decided on by Congress, before whom the subject will be in a few days. From the number and character of the troops in the garrison, it is hoped that its reduction will not be attended with much difficulty or delay."[40]

While public opinion in the Southeast confidently expected an advance in force into East Florida,[41] a parallel expedition was preparing in the Southwest, its destinations Mobile and Pensacola. That section of the

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[40] Pinckney to Eustis, Dec. 10, 1812. *War Dept. MSS.* Monroe to Pinckney, Jan. 13, 1813. *Military Book,* VI, 268.

[41] The *National Intelligencer* (Dec. 22, 1812) published a dispatch from Charleston declaring: "There is no doubt in our minds but that immediate possession will be taken of the Floridas, with a force competent to put down all opposition. Policy has long since dictated this measure, and, if we are correctly informed, Gen. Pinckney left this with his suite yesterday, to effect the desirable object." Colonel Smith, it was reported, was ready for offensive action, and a corre-

union, as we have seen, had looked upon the acquisition of all Florida as one of the most certain results of war with Great Britain. General Jackson, in his proclamation to his division of Tennessee militia, issued soon after the news of war, appealed to a sentiment almost universal among the men of his state. "You burn with anxiety to learn on what theatre your arms will find employment. Then turn your eyes to the South! Behold in the province of West Florida, a territory whose rivers and harbors are indispensable to the prosperity of the western, and still more so, to the eastern division of our state. . . . It is here that an employment adapted to your situation awaits your courage and your zeal."[42]

Even before war was declared, over twenty-five hundred West Tennesseeans—representing "what was probably the best body of militia ever seen in America" —had volunteered their services, which Jackson had tendered to the Secretary of War. It was not until October, however, that any call was made upon Jackson's division. Then Secretary Eustis requested Governor Blount "to call out, organize, arm and equip, fifteen hundred of the militia of Tennessee," to be brought together "at such parts of the State as you may judge

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spondent at Point Petre had seen a letter from Mr. Troup, stating that "our affairs in Florida would probably be placed on a satisfactory footing in a fortnight." A Raleigh correspondent of the Philadelphia *Aurora* declared it to be confidently believed "that the State's troops in this state are under marching orders for Florida." *Aurora,* Jan. 14, 1813.

[42] Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson,* I, 79.

most convenient for their march to New Orleans for the defence of the Lower Country."[43] The Tennessee troops were to serve under General Wilkinson, in command at New Orleans. Despite Jackson's extreme dislike of Wilkinson, he consented to serve under him (packing his duelling pistols the while with his baggage), and issued a call for the number of troops requested, setting Nashville as the place and December 10 as the time of rendezvous. On the appointed day, not fifteen hundred but two thousand and seventy volunteers gathered in Nashville. Governor Blount, after some hesitation, accepted the entire number, thinking that "the patriotic ardor of the volunteers would otherwise be chilled," and on December 31 instructed Jackson to set out with them for New Orleans, the six hundred cavalry under Colonel Coffee by land, the two regiments of infantry in flat-bottomed boats, via the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi rivers. Upon reaching New Orleans Jackson was to "await the order of the President of the United States"; thus the Tennessee governor did what he could to make Jackson independent of Wilkinson.[44]

A week later the expedition set out. While it had been called into service ostensibly "for the defence of the Lower Country," later events showed plainly that the government intended to use it for offensive opera-

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[43] Ibid., I, 73, 78. Eustis to Blount, Oct. 21, 1812. *Jackson Papers, MSS.*, Vol. X.

[44] Blount to Jackson, Dec. 31, 1812. *Jackson Papers, MSS.*, Vol. X.

tions in the Floridas. It was in fact to form the western column of an army of invasion of which the eastern column was Pinckney's division. Jackson, who saw the real purpose of the government, revealed his enthusiasm for the plan in a letter written on the eve of his departure to the Secretary of War. "I have the pleasure," he wrote, "to inform you that I am now at the head of 2,070 volunteers, the choicest of our citizens, who go at the call of their country to execute the will of the government, who have no constitutional scruples [against invading foreign soil]; and if the government orders, will rejoice at the opportunity of placing the American eagle on the ramparts of Mobile, Pensacola, and Fort St. Augustine, effectually banishing from the southern coasts all British influence."[45]

The enthusiasm displayed by Jackson's West Tennessee division was characteristic of the spirit of the whole Southwest. Throughout the section, men thought the time ripe to be up and at the Spaniard, whether in Florida or in Mexico, where a revolt against Spanish rule had reached threatening proportions. "The Western Country is all in motion and confusion," wrote Madison. "It would be grievous if so much laudable ardor and effort should not be properly concentrated and directed."[46] Madison alluded to private expeditions then preparing to aid the Mexican revolutionists. He had written Monroe a few days before

[45] Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 372.
[46] Madison to Monroe, Sept. 10, 1812. *Monroe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. XIII.

of an "illegal enterprise" on foot in Tennessee, and the Secretary of State had at once written to Governor Blount of the report that armed citizens of Tennessee were assembling in Giles County for the purpose of joining the Mexican revolutionists. Blount replied that there was no evidence of such a plot in the state; but Tennessee was undeniably interested in an expedition fitting out in Louisiana under Augustus Magee, a former lieutenant in the United States army. In the preceding April, as we have seen, a writer in the Nashville *Clarion* had called the attention of his fellow-citizens to "the empire of Mexico, a celestial region," where "the statesman shall see an accession of territory sufficient to double the extent of the republic," and the newspaper, besides giving editorial commendation of the article, had suggestively followed it, with a series of historical and descriptive accounts of Mexico. Tennessee eyes now watched with the greatest interest as Magee, acting nominally under the direction of a Spaniard, Bernardo Gutierrez, assembled his party of filibusters in defiance of a proclamation from Governor Claiborne, and in September crossed the Sabine into Texas.[47]

While Jackson was preparing his division for service in Florida and Magee leading his adventurers into

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[47] Madison to Monroe, Sept. 1, 1812. *Monroe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. XIII. Monroe to Blount, Sept. 3, 1812. *Domestic Letters,* (State Dept. MSS.), XVI, 199. Blount to Monroe, Oct. 3, 1812. *Misc. Letters* (State Dept. MSS.), Vol. 38. Nashville *Clarion,* Apr. 28, 1812. Niles' *Register,* III, 64. *National Intelligencer,* Oct. 1, 1812 (Claiborne's Proclamation).

Texas, the patriotic citizens of East Tennessee, unwilling to let all the glory fall to their western brethren, had initiated an expedition of their own, though with the full approval of the state authorities. Under the leadership of John Williams of Knoxville, over two hundred men of that section of the state had formed a regiment of volunteer cavalry, ready to march upon short notice to any point on the frontier where their services might be needed.[48]

Upon learning of the failure of Newnan's expedition against the Indians and the danger to which the Georgia border was exposed, Williams called upon his regiment to assemble at Knoxville December 1, each man providing himself with a horse, a rifle or musket, a brace of pistols, a tomahawk, and such other equipment and clothing as might be necessary, and a supply of provisions sufficient to take him to the St. Mary's river. It was shameful, said Williams, that Georgia should have to bear alone the burden of opposition to the hostile Indians. "Our brethren in a sister state need our aid, will it be withheld?" "Freemen ought to risk something," the proclamation continued; "let us go on our own expenses in the first instance. If we can thus be useful to our country, we will be more than compensated."[49]

By December 4, one hundred and fifty men had assembled at Knoxville in response to Williams's call.

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[48] Blount to Jackson, June 12, 1812. *Jackson Papers, MSS.*, Vol. IX.

[49] Nashville *Clarion*, Nov. 23, 1812.

The force, wrote a resident of Knoxville, was "composed principally of the most conspicuous citizens of this section of the country—militia officers from the major-general of this division to subalterns of companies, members of the legislature, attorneys at the head of their profession, merchants, and citizens of the first respectability and wealth." For the benefit of some few of them who were not men of means, the citizens of Knoxville subscribed three hundred dollars to be used as a fund for the relief of the needy.[50] Williams was made sole commander, with power to appoint all subordinate officers. The party left Knoxville December 4, was at Asheville, N. C., on the eleventh, and on the nineteenth reached Washington, Georgia.[51]

From Asheville Williams wrote to Governor Mitchell, explaining that in view of the apparent want of troops to check the savages and also of the expected occupation of East Florida, he had raised his regiment of volunteers "to share with our brethren the dangers and glories of the field," and that they wished "to cooperate with the troops both of the United States and Georgia in our country's cause." Mitchell replied courteously, hinting that if the United States continued to delay about controlling the "present occupants of East Florida," Georgia might take independent action, acknowledging the "gallantry and patriotism" which had

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[50] Niles' *Register*, III, 267-268.
[51] Nashville *Clarion*, Dec. 15, 1812; Jan. 5, Jan. 12, 1813.

prompted Williams's course, and suggesting Colerain or Point Petre as a place of rendezvous.[52]

To General Pinckney Williams wrote on Christmas day from his camp near Sparta, Georgia, tendering the services of "upwards of two hundred effective volunteers, mounted on strong horses," anxious "to cooperate with the troops of the U. States in our Country's cause."[53] Pinckney, somewhat perplexed at the unexpected offer, asked for instructions from Washington, giving it as his intention meanwhile "to furnish them with provisions and employ them against the hostile Indians." Williams arrived at Colerain on the St. Mary's river January 7, and placed himself under the orders of Brigadier General Flournoy. Meanwhile the Indians, through the agent, Benjamin Hawkins, had applied for peace. Pinckney therefore delayed for some weeks before ordering the volunteers into the Indian country, but on January 29 reported that, having allowed sufficient time to elapse for the government to come to a decision on that question, he had at length authorized Flournoy to give the word. Flournoy accordingly wrote Pinckney, February 6, that "the Tennessee Volunteers started from their camp on Wednesday last against the Indian Towns at war with the United States, to the number of about 250 men including a few Georgians." Colonel Smith with two hundred regulars was to meet them at a point near the

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[52] Ibid., Feb. 9, 1813.
[53] *Jackson Papers, MSS.*, Vol. X.

first Indian town. Whether the volunteers should be permanently retained, Pinckney wrote, depended upon the final decision of Congress as to the occupation of East Florida.[54]

By the middle of February it must have appeared to the Spanish that they had few more days of power in the Floridas. Jackson with his two thousand men reached Natchez on the fifteenth, where at Wilkinson's request he halted and encamped his army, ready to descend the river to New Orleans or march overland to Pensacola, if the blow were to be struck there. Wilkinson, with several hundred regulars, was at New Orleans. On the St. Mary's river, and along the St. John's within East Florida, were between five hundred and a thousand men, regulars, Georgia militia, and the Tennessee volunteers. An order from Washington would be sufficient to expel the Spanish from all Florida.

Madison undoubtedly expected to give that order. The first vote in the Senate, on Anderson's motion for a committee to report a bill for the occupation of Florida, showed a majority of eighteen to twelve for the measure—a safe majority for the administration.[55]

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[54] Pinckney to the Secretary of War, Jan. 12, Jan. 19, Jan. 29, Feb. 16, Feb. 23, 1813. *War Dept. MSS.*

[55] *Annals of Congress,* 12 Cong., 2 sess., pp. 124-125. Onis, in Philadelphia, thought the bill certain to pass. He argued plausibly that after one bill for this purpose had been defeated, the President would not have reintroduced the proposal without assurance of sufficient support to carry it. (De Onis to Kindelan, Dec. 27, 1812, Jan. 18, 1813. *East Fla. Papers: To and from Ministers and Consuls,* 1812-1817.) He wrote to Admiral Warren, in command of the British fleet,

January 14, at the request of the Senate, Madison submitted a report of the Secretary of State on the situation in East Florida. Monroe reported that he had no precise information of any movement of the British toward taking the province, but explained that any such design could be easily disguised and that "the intention and the act will become known at the same time." The desire of the people of the province to be received under the protection of the United States he thought evidenced by the cession to Mathews and by McIntosh's letter of the preceding July, a copy of which accompanied the report. As to De Onis, it appeared after some correspondence that he "had no power to make the proposed cession, or to enter into the desired arrangement, and from a provision in the new Constitution of Spain, it is to be inferred that none could be contemplated by the Spanish Regency." Monroe argued that Spain seemed destined to be an appendage of either Great Britain or France, and that in either case the United States must expect trouble from the border Indians and must relinquish hope of any settlement of the spoliation claims. He therefore advocated the passage of legislation authorizing the President to occupy all Florida.[56]

January 19, the committee brought in a bill author-

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reminding him of the importance of preventing Florida from passing into the hands of the United States and asking aid for its defence. (Onis to Warren, Dec. 28, 1812. *Spanish Legation,* II. State Dept. MSS.)

[56] Senate Files, 12 Cong. *Return Copy of State Papers.*

izing the President to occupy both Floridas and to exercise government there, provided that that portion of the country east of the Perdido might be "the subject of future negotiation."[57] Now, however, the Federalists and the President's personal enemies in the Senate rallied for a determined opposition, and they carried with them a number of northern Republicans. The measure could be of little advantage to the northern states; it was no longer coupled, as Senator Hunter complained, with the complementary project of the annexation of Canada;[58] in short, the southern expansionists now offered no price to their northern colleagues. Gallatin, a reliable observer, wrote a few months later, that any attack on Florida which "should involve us in a war with Spain [would] disgust every man north of Washington."[59]

It was no matter for surprise, therefore, when on January 26, Senator Smith of Maryland moved to strike out the second section of the bill, the section authorizing the occupation of that portion of Florida east of the Perdido. This was the real heart of the measure, for the portion of Florida west of the Perdido was already by law and proclamation part of the United States, and only Mobile remained in Spanish possession. If Smith's amendment were adopted, Pensacola in West Florida and all of the eastern province would be left

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[57] *Annals of Congress*, 12 Cong., 2 sess., p. 127.
[58] Ibid., 13 Cong., Vol. I, p. 528.
[59] Gallatin to Monroe, May 8, 1813. *Writings of Albert Gallatin*, I, 545.

to Spain. When the amendment came to a vote February 2, the sectional division was plain. The only southern votes for the amendment were those of Giles of Virginia and Pope of Kentucky—neither a surprise. The only northern votes against it were cast by four faithful Republicans from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Ohio, their colleagues in each case voting in the affirmative. Eliminating these few exceptions to the sectional alignment, we have the following states solidly arrayed upon opposing sides: for the amendment, or against the occupation of East Florida —Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland; against the amendment, or for the occupation of East Florida— North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Louisiana. Thirteen Republicans voted for the amendment, and save Giles and Pope, all came from states north of the Potomac and Ohio rivers. The amendment was adopted by a vote of nineteen to sixteen, and the section of the bill providing for the occupation of East Florida was thus stricken out.[60]

What remained of the bill passed both Senate and House and became law, February 12, 1813,[61] but in this form it merely authorized the executive to do what had been at least implicitly authorized long before.

The adoption of Smith's amendment was decisive in its effect upon the government's military plans. Four

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[60] *Annals of Congress*, 12 Cong., 2 sess., p. 130.
[61] Ibid., p. 133.

days after this event, John Armstrong, the new Secretary of War, wrote Jackson: "The causes of embodying and marching to New Orleans the corps under your command having ceased to exist, you will, on the receipt of this letter, consider it as dismissed from public service . . ."[62] On the fifteenth similar news went forth to Pinckney: "The late private proceedings of Congress have resulted in a decision not to invade East Florida at present. You will therefore make such disposition of your troops as shall best promote their health and discipline."[63]

How Jackson marched his troops back to Tennessee in defiance of Armstrong's instructions to dismiss them at once (instructions evidently due only to ignorance of the situation) is a well known story. The problem that faced Pinckney was of a different sort, for the question of the government's precise relation to the East Florida patriots had still to be settled. Pinckney received his new instructions February 26, and at once wrote to enquire whether the posts on Amelia island and the St. John's were to be abandoned and whether he was to open negotiations with the Spanish authorities for an amnesty for the insurgents. Armstrong was able to reply that De Onis had, on behalf of the government of Spain, communicated to the Secretary of State an Act of Amnesty for the insurgents who had followed Mathews. He enclosed to Pinckney a copy of this

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[62] Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 377.

[63] Armstrong to Pinckney, Feb. 15, 1813. *Military Book* (War Dept. MSS.), VI, 289.

document, instructing him to verify the credit which would be given it by the governor at St. Augustine, and if he acknowledged its authority, to withdraw the United States troops from the occupied sections of East Florida.[64]

General Pinckney thereupon opened negotiations with the Spanish governor; but meanwhile he had a report to make of the expedition against the Florida Indians under Colonel Williams and Colonel Smith. Those two officers had made their reports to General Flournoy on February 23 and 24 respectively. After uniting their commands on February 7 they had marched into the Indian country and reached Paine's town and Bowlegs's town, both of which they found deserted. They destroyed the towns—386 houses in these and other villages—destroyed or appropriated 1500 to 2000 bushels of corn and 2000 deerskins, and drove off some three hundred horses and four hundred cattle. They fought several skirmishes with bands of Indians, but the savages always took refuge in impenetrable swamps or "hammocks." One Indian town of some importance they were unable to reach, but, wrote Williams, "the balance of the Seminole Nation is completely in waste." So complete was the devastation wrought that a writer to Niles' *Register* later in the season declared the expedition had "reduced the deluded people to the most calamitous condition. The survivors are literally starv-

[64] Pinckney to Armstrong, Feb. 26, 1813. *War Dept. MSS.* Armstrong to Pinckney, March 7, 1813. *Military Book,* VI, 309.

ing." Smith and Williams had been highly successful in executing vengeance, but the *Georgia Journal* wondered why all this ruin had been wrought after the Indians, as stated by the most reliable authority, "had offered to lay down their arms and submit to any terms" which the United States might impose.[65]

The Tennessee volunteers were discharged from the Federal service February 25. A month later, from Knoxville, Williams made his official report to Governor Blount. In June the governor tendered to Williams and his men the official thanks of the state of Tennessee, adding the welcome news that the United States paymaster at Nashville was instructed to pay them for their services.[66]

In pursuance of the Act of Amnesty communicated to Monroe by De Onis, Governor Kindelan on March 18 issued a proclamation extending the privileges of the Act to any of the insurgents who within four

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[65] Williams to Flournoy, Feb. 23, 1813. Smith to Flournoy, Feb. 24, 1813. Copies inclosed in Pinckney to Armstrong, Mar. 8, 1813. *War Dept. MSS.* Niles' *Register,* IV, 116. *Georgia Journal* quoted in Charleston *Courier,* Mar. 3, 1813.

Colonel Williams, like Mathews and Newman before him, took occasion to express the highest admiration for Colonel Smith, and his "high appreciation of his conduct as an officer and a soldier." Smith had been through trying times, dealing not only with physical difficulties but with the delicate problems arising from the contact of regulars with militia and volunteers, yet he seems to have aroused the admiration and the friendship of all who served with him. In March General Pinckney granted him a well deserved furlough. (Pinckney to Armstrong, Mar. 8, 1813.)

[66] Nashville *Whig,* July 20, 1813.

months would take the oath of allegiance to Spain and thereafter "demean themselves as good and faithful Spaniards." The Legislative Council of the patriots, in a counter-proclamation signed by Buckner Harris, Daniel Delany (or Delamig), and John H. McIntosh, declared that they viewed "with disdain and abhorrence the proffer of pardon by the corrupt government of St. Augustine," and pledged "their reputation and property, to support the glorious cause in which they are engaged."[67]

Under these circumstances there was nothing for Pinckney to do but leave the patriots to try their strength with the Spanish, and though he tried to secure more favorable terms for those who declined to take the oath of allegiance, he went on uninterruptedly with his preparations for evacuating the province. For the first time since the attack on Fernandina the correspondence between the American and the Spanish authorities took on a friendly tone. After several exchanges with Kindelan, Pinckney, on April 16, gave to Major Manning, who held Smith's former position at Camp New Hope, his orders for retirement. The troops were to leave that encampment April 29, and when they should have reached Point Petre the post on Amelia island was likewise to be abandoned. Pinckney cautioned Manning that as his command was leaving neutral territory, it must avoid all acts of destruction and must refrain from giving aid to either

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[67] Niles' *Register*, IV, 127.

the patriots or the Spanish.[68] The retirement was begun on the twenty-seventh, the troops at Camp New Hope, contrary to instructions, leaving the buildings in flames. May 15, Pinckney reported that all the troops had been withdrawn from East Florida and were encamped at Point Petre. On the sixth or seventh Governor Kindelan had arrived at Fernandina with forty regulars, a collector for the port, and other civil and military officials. A St. Mary's correspondent of the Charleston *Courier* reported that the town changed hands "with the greatest order and decorum," that "a dinner and a ball were given, and nothing but harmony prevailed."[69]

In contrast with this report of "a dinner and a ball" at Fernandina is the description of contemporary conditions at St. Augustine and in the province in general. "Great distress prevails in St. Augustine for want of provisions," said a writer in Niles' *Register*. "The inhabitants are deserting it for want of bread. The crops of corn, etc., in Florida were last year very short, and the war has prevented their usual supplies from the United States." Years later one who had lived through the period of the American occupation testified that when the Americans left Florida "there were no hogs or cattle left in the country east of the St. John's.

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[68] Pinckney to Manning, Apr. 16, 1813. *War Dept. MSS.*

[69] Correspondence of Pinckney and Kindelan, *Senate Misc. Doc.* No. 55, 36 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 90-96. Pinckney to Armstrong, May 15, 1813. *War Dept. MSS.* Charleston *Courier*, May 17, 1813.

They had killed and destroyed everything except a few, and when they left the country they drove away some with them." This was the country over which the Spanish and patriots were now left to contend.[70]

But the United States government had not, even upon the defeat of its favorite measure in the Senate, abandoned hope of securing East Florida as one of the fruits of the existing war. Madison or Monroe now conceived the idea of having the nation's claim to that province recognized in the peace treaty. In his instructions to Gallatin and his colleagues on the eve of Gallatin's departure to take part in the proposed Russian mediation, Monroe urged him "to bring to the view of her [Great Britain's] ministers the relation which the United States bear to the Floridas, having a right to West Florida by cession from France, and a claim to East Florida as an indemnity for spoliations." Mobile would probably have been seized before the commencement of the negotiations. "And as the law authorizing the President to take possession of East Florida in case any attempt should be made by any foreign power to occupy it is still in force, it will be proper for you to have the object of that law in your recollection in your negotiations."[71] In a later note Monroe declared that excellent evidence existed that Spain had sold both provinces to Great Britain, and added: "My firm belief is

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[70] Niles' *Register*, IV, 116. Testimony of John M. Bowden, *Senate Misc. Doc.* No. 55, 36 Cong., 1 sess., p. 15.

[71] Monroe to Gallatin, Adams, and Bayard, Apr. 27, 1813. *Writings of Albert Gallatin*, I, 539, note.

that if we were possessed of both it would facilitate your negotiations in favor of impressment and every other object. . ."[72]

But in Gallatin Monroe found a man who not only shared the general northern dislike for the Florida scheme, but who was earnestly fearful of the disruptive effects its prosecution might have upon country and party, and who saw, furthermore, that a policy of unscrupulous aggression against Spain might conceivably cost the United States the good offices of the Czar, upon which the success of the mission was thought to turn. Gallatin urged not only the entire abandonment of the designs against East Florida, but even desistance from the seizure of Mobile. "You know," he wrote, "that to take by force any place in possession of another nation, whatever our claim to that place may be, is war; and you must be aware that both Russia and Great Britain will feel disposed, if not to support the pretensions of Spain against us, at least to take part against the aggressor."[73] Gallatin insisted upon and received, for purposes of negotiation, a formal statement of the withdrawal of the American forces from East Florida.[74] Having thus, so far as he could, satisfied what he felt to be the needs of diplomacy, Gallatin seized the occasion to warn Monroe of the

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[72] Ibid., I, 542, ff.

[73] Gallatin to Monroe, May 2, 1813. Ibid., I, 539-540.

[74] Gallatin to Monroe, May 2, 1813. Monroe to Gallatin, May 5, 1813. Ibid., I, 541.

perils of the domestic situation as they appeared to a northern Republican.

"By withdrawing our troops [from East Florida]," wrote Gallatin, "we withdraw the pretence; but the impolitic occupancy of Mobile will, I fear, renew our difficulties. The object is at present of very minor importance, swelled into consequence by the representations from that quarter, and which I would not at this moment have attempted, amongst other reasons, because it was a Southern one, and will, if it should involve us in a war with Spain, disgust every man north of Washington. You will pardon the freedom with which, on the eve of parting with you, I speak on this subject. It is intended as a general caution, which I think important, because I know and see every day the extent of geographical feeling, and the necessity of prudence if we mean to preserve and invigorate the Union."[75]

So far as Mobile was concerned, Gallatin's warning had no effect. The town was occupied by Wilkinson in April.[76] But from this time on the administration abandoned the dream of an immediate annexation of East Florida. Gallatin's insistence upon the diplomatic benefits of that bit of abnegation no doubt had its weight; but one must conclude that the more important cause was the "extent of geographical feeling," showing itself in such decisive fashion in Congress.

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[75] Gallatin to Monroe, May 8, 1813. Ibid., I, 545.
[76] Adams, *United States*, VII, 215.

CHAPTER VI

Failure

For nearly a year after the withdrawal of the United States troops from East Florida, the so-called patriots of that province continued to hope for annexation by the United States. From the time when their formal cession of the province to Mathews was rejected, these people had been in a most unfortunate position. Largely, it appears, a band of unscrupulous adventurers, they received the hatred and contempt of loyal Spaniards and the distrust of the officers of the United States. In September, 1812, the loyalist, Clarke, wrote Estrada that except for a few in Amelia island and in a stockade in Falio's plantation, they had withdrawn into Georgia and the American islands. In the same month a party of these *émigrés* attempted to take possession of Amelia island but were driven off by the American commandant, Captain Massias. Thereupon, Governor Mitchell directed that they disband their military organization, and that any who desired should be enlisted in either the regular troops or the Georgia vol-

unteers. "Since then," wrote Clarke, "the white cockade is treated with still greater scorn."[1]

Undismayed by these misfortunes, the patriots, led by McIntosh and Buckner Harris, kept up the semblance of civil government. It was reported in December that they had set up a court in a house on Bell's river, under Harris as judge, where they passed sentences of confiscation upon the property of all their comrades who had abandoned the province, and executed the sale of two free negroes, although these had been guilty of no crime and carried their certificates of liberty of several years' standing.[2]

In March, 1813, when it became known that the troops under Colonel Smith would be withdrawn, such of the patriots as could do so began transporting their movable property into Georgia.[3] A considerable group of them determined to continue their contest with the Spanish government, hoping either that the United States would again intervene, or else that they could make terms with St. Augustine which would assure them possession of some of the lands they had hoped to gain by the revolution. We have already seen the scornful proclamation in which this group, represented by McIntosh, Harris, and Delany, rejected Kindelan's offer of amnesty. This was the reason, thought Clarke, why many of the rebels had not gone to St. Augustine

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[1] G. J. F. Clarke to Estrada Sept. 21, Sept. 30, Oct. 16, 1812. *East Fla. Papers: Various Subjects,* 1812 Aug.-1813.
[2] Clarke to Estrada, Dec. 5, 1812. Ibid.
[3] Clarke to Estrada, Mar. 15, 1813. Ibid.

to renew the oath of allegiance. McIntosh still controlled some of the "Georgia vagabonds who desire nothing beyond an opportunity for robbery and to bask in the plenty of those who depart; . . . but there is no doubt," Clarke added, "that, with four or five exceptions, all the rest will present themselves at St. Augustine."[4]

How many of those who adhered to the patriot cause were "Georgia vagabonds" and how many were *bona fide* residents of East Florida it is impossible to say. Of one kind or the other there were enough to maintain a hold upon portions of the mainland along the St. Mary's river. Early in August, 1813, a battle took place "between the patriots and royalists" in sight of St. Mary's, Georgia. Apparently the royalists had set out from Fernandina for the purpose of breaking up a nest of the insurgents. The royalists were completely defeated, according to the report from St. Mary's, with a loss of six killed and twelve or fourteen wounded. The Americans on the Georgia side expected that the insurgents would follow up their victory with an attack on Amelia island.[5]

Instead of taking the offensive, the patriots thought the time opportune to propose negotiations for peace. As a feeler, William Cone, one of their number, wrote on August 24 to a personal friend named Falio, a loyalist, stating his belief that the breach might yet be

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[4] Clarke to Estrada, Apr. 11, 1813. Ibid.
[5] Niles' *Register*, IV, 424.

healed and suggesting three conditions upon which he thought the patriots would be willing to lay down their arms. These were (1) the removal of negro troops from the province, (2) a grant of lands to the patriots in the Alachua country, (3) complete amnesty. Two weeks later Buckner Harris and James Dell addressed a formal note to Governor Kindelan proposing an armistice pending a complete understanding and the appointment of commissioners with full power to treat with the patriots and to cede such portions of unlocated land as might reasonably be asked.[6] September 7, Samuel Betts of Fernandina met McIntosh and Delany in St. Mary's. McIntosh proposed an armistice between the patriots and the inhabitants of Amelia island, by which the latter should have unmolested communication with St. Augustine and be free to cut timber on the mainland; but upon Delany's objection the proposal was modified so as to restrict the Spanish subjects to the limits of their island, and the patriot leaders threatened to lay Fernandina in ashes if their demands were not granted. They made it plain too that they were determined to gain possession of the Alachua lands.[7]

The patriots received no reply to their proposals, as Harris complained in a letter to Kindelan in October; and he joined with his complaint a warning that his band had received a considerable re-enforcement and

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[6] Cone to Falio, Aug. 24, 1813. Harris and Dell to Kindelan, Sept. 7, 1813. *E. Fla. Papers: Papers of the Rev. In E. Fla.*

[7] Betts to F. R. Yonge, Sept. 13, 1813. *E. Fla. Papers: Various Subjects,* 1812 Aug.-1813.

was able to contend with any force in the province, and that while the authorities pursued their present policy no Spanish subject would rest in peace outside the walls of St. Augustine.[8] And as if to make good the threat, sixty men crossed the border from Georgia (so the Spanish asserted), and led by Harris himself, seized and fortified a house in the plantation of one Ashley.[9]

In December a further effort was made to come to terms with the Spanish officials. A proclamation issued by Harris on the seventh spoke of the probability of an accommodation and called on the patriots to suppress rigorously any disorders against the Spanish subjects. Harris and Dell then proceeded to Point Petre, Georgia, where on the eleventh they notified the officials at Fernandina that they would be glad to treat with persons authorized for the purpose.[10]

Unable to reach any agreement with the Spanish government, the patriots now turned again to the United States. Determined to secure possession of the Alachua lands, which had been cleared of Indians by Smith and Williams, they moved into this district and established a government under the name of the Legislative Coun-

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[8] Harris to Kindelan, Oct. 23, 1813. *E. Fla. Papers*: *Papers of the Rev. in E. Fla.*

[9] Onis to Monroe, Dec. 8, 1813. *Spanish Legation*, II (State Dept. MSS.)

[10] Proclamation, Dec. 7, 1813. Harris and Dell to Yonge and Arredondo, Dec. 11, 1813. Copies enclosed in Hazen Kimball to Pickering, Jan. 22, 1814. *Pickering Papers, MSS.*, XXX, 200.

cil of the District of Alachua. Here they built a blockhouse which they called Fort Mitchell, and on January 25, 1814, drew up a petition to the Congress of the United States praying for annexation and relating the story of their hopes during the American occupation, their disappointment at the withdrawal of the troops, their flight, the loss of their possessions, their resumption of arms, and their determination to hold the country or die.[11] As minister to the United States they appointed Wilson Conner, who set out for Washington with the petition.

To General Pinckney, Harris wrote February 2, tendering the services of his band against the "common enemy." They had, he said, a strong blockhouse, garrisoned by 150 men on the "Pirara" near the site of Paine's old Indian town. They had no enemy to fear and nothing to do but survey their lands and prepare for planting. They were determined never to relinquish the country.[12]

There seemed some reason to hope that an appeal to the United States at this time might bring results. Despite the withdrawal of the troops, there had been continual friction along the Georgia-Florida border. Disputes had arisen over the ownership of runaway slaves, the responsibility for Indian depredations, and

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[11] *State Dept. MSS.* (Div. of Pubs.). The petition is signed by James Dell, colonel-commandant of the patriot forces, and 102 other persons—practically all English names.

[12] Enclosed in Pinckney to Monroe, Feb. 28, 1814. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 43. (State Dept. MSS.)

alleged violations of the amnesty promised the insurgents.[13] Now the Creek war was on, and it was firmly believed that the Spanish had given assistance and encouragement to the Indians. Monroe had declared in October that "the late conduct of the Spanish authorities in East Florida, in furnishing the Indians with ammunition and arms for the express purpose of making war on the U. S. forms a new case," and that "whenever Congress acts on the subject again, it will be by authorizing the possession of that province, which will render a case for the bayonet there and negotiation elsewhere."[14] A portion of the press had been clamoring for open war with Spain and seizure of her colonies.[15] Jefferson wrote in December, 1813, to a personal friend in Spain: "We are in a state of semi-warfare with your adjoining colonies, the Floridas. . . . The commanding officers in the Floridas have excited and armed the neighboring savages to war against us. . . . This conduct of the Spanish officers will probably oblige us to take possession of the Floridas, and the rather as we believe the English will otherwise seize them, and use them as stations to distract and annoy us."[16]

Furthermore, McIntosh had been in Washington in

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[13] *East Fla. Papers*: *To and from the U. S.*, 1813-1820, *passim.*

[14] Monroe to Col. Williams, Oct. 16, 1813. *Monroe's Writings*, 1810-1831. *Lennox MSS.*

[15] *Georgia Argus*, copied in Phila. *Aurora*, Sept. 1, 1813. *National Advocate*, copied in *National Intelligencer*, Oct. 18, 1813.

[16] Jefferson to Toronda Coruna, Dec. 14, 1813. *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, VI, 273.

the preceding summer, attempting to secure compensation for a part of his losses in the revolution, and had been not unkindly received. His claim was that, by virtue of the agreement by which Fernandina was ceded to Mathews, the revenues collected during the occupation were to have been turned over to the local authorities, and therefore should properly come to him in return for great outlays he had made in support of the cause. In a letter to Monroe, Madison explained a possible way of helping McIntosh. Whether or not the United States was bound to indemnify "the suffering believers in Matthews' powers" was a question for Congress to decide. But "in the meantime, if the money could be got from the hands of the Collector into those of McIntosh, so as to form an item in the general acct. open between the U. S. and Spain, it might not be amiss."[17]

The minister from the District of Alachua had therefore some reason to hope that he and his petition might meet with a friendly reception in Washington. Conner set out for the capital February 15, 1814, but was detained by illness on the road and wrote to Monroe March 15 from Louisburg, N. C., forwarding his official papers and promising to come at once to Washington should his mission find favor with the President and Congress. April 7 he wrote again, stating that he

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[17] McIntosh to Monroe, Washington, Aug. 14, 1813. *State Dept. MSS.* (Div. of Pubs.). Madison to Monroe, Aug. 19, 1813. *Monroe Papers, MSS.*, Vol. XIII.

had had no reply to his former letter and asking whether that and his papers had been received.[18]

Monroe characteristically took his own time to reply. His note of April 19 definitely crushed the patriot hopes for assistance from Washington, and as definitely marked an abandonment by the United States of all designs for early annexation of any part of East Florida.

"The papers referred to in your letter of the 7th instant," wrote Monroe, "were duly received at this office. The United States being at peace with Spain, no countenance can be given by their government to the proceedings of the revolutionary party in East Florida, if it is composed of Spanish subjects,—and still less can it be given to them if it consists of American citizens, who, so far as their conduct may fall within the scope of existing laws long enacted and well known and understood, will be liable to censure."[19]

Thus, twenty-five months after the opening of the revolution in East Florida, the United States finally repudiated all connection with it.

While the expansionists of Georgia saw their hopes come to grief, their friends in Tennessee were realizing part of the advantages they had expected from the war. Mobile, as previously stated, was occupied by Wilkin-

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[18] Conner to Monroe, Mar. 15, 1814. *State Dept. MSS.* (Div. of Pubs.). Conner to Monroe, Apr. 7, 1814. *Misc. Letters,* Vol. 43 (State Dept. MSS.).

[19] *Domestic Letters,* XVI, 234 (State Dept. MSS.).

son in the spring of 1813, and the southern end of the route to the Gulf thus secured. The center of that route was still held by the Creeks, but before the summer ended the Indians themselves were giving an excuse for their expulsion. The raid of Smith and Williams into the Alachua country had its repercussion among the Creeks, already disposed to hostilities by the influence of Tecumseh and the intrigues of the British.[20] In August, 1813, a thousand Creek warriors fell upon Fort Mims on Lake Tensaw and massacred 250 of the occupants. Three columns of troops, from the Gulf, from Georgia, and from Tennessee, were presently set in motion into the Indian country; the heaviest portion of the campaign falling upon General Jackson with a force of regulars and Tennessee militia.

It was with a grim satisfaction that the frontiersmen watched the Indians lay the foundation of their own destruction. A year before, the Nashville *Clarion,* speaking of the necessity of expelling the Creeks from their lands, had made the naive comment: "Fortunately the crimes of this nation have supplied us with a pretext for the dismemberment of their country. An expedition will soon have to move against them to exact a terrible vengeance for the blood they have spilt among us; and the republic must indemnify itself for the expenses of this movement, by appropriating to itself and dividing among the conquerors the better part of that land

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[20] Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson,* I, 89-90.

which is so useless to them, and which will be so valuable to us."[21]

With a similar note of pleasure, Jefferson wrote, after the opening of the Creek war, that the Indians, by their atrocities, "have given us the right, as we possess the power, to exterminate or to expatriate them beyond the Mississippi."[22]

It was in the precise spirit of these expressions that Jackson, after his conquest of the Creek country, framed the terms of the treaty of peace. The Creeks were forced to cede two-thirds of their territory, an L-shaped area embracing the river routes coveted by Tennessee and severing the Creeks from the Spanish on the south and the Choctaws and Chickasaws on the west.[23]

Jackson's Creek campaign brought him into collision with the Spanish of West Florida, but his capture of Pensacola was the best justified of all the series of aggressions upon Spanish territory. Jackson no doubt would have been delighted to take permanent possession of the town; but in the absence of any authority to do so, his expedition was in reality what it purported to be —an effort to enforce neutrality upon a station which was being openly used by the British.

To representations such as Jackson's, charging the Spanish with unneutral conduct, the Spanish could readily reply in kind, and the governor of West Florida did

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[21] Copied in Niles' *Register*, III, 52-53.
[22] *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, VI, 273.
[23] Babcock, *Rise of American Nationality*, p. 132.

not miss the opportunity to remind Jackson that the United States had harbored the revolutionists Gutierrez and Toledo, and had not exerted itself overmuch to prevent their using American soil to fit out expeditions against Mexico.[24] In truth, ever since the summer of 1812, the southwestern border had been astir with revolutionary activity directed against the Spanish rule in Texas.

The most prominent of the revolutionists who visited the United States were Bernardo Gutierrez de Lara and Jose Alvarez de Toledo. Both attempted to interest the United States government in their enterprises, with a degree of success which embarrassed the government while it in no way helped the revolutionists;[25] but both, and particularly Gutierrez, were warmly supported in the Southwest.

Gutierrez, as previously related, united with Augustus Magee, formerly an officer in the United States army, and in September, 1812, their expedition invaded Texas with Magee as colonel and Gutierrez as nominal commander-in-chief.[26] Despite Governor Claiborne's proclamation of August 12, cautioning the citi-

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[24] Manrique to Jackson, July 26, 1814. Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson,* I, 129.

[25] Cox, "Monroe and the Early Mexican Revolutionary Agents," *A. H. A. Reports,* 1911, I, 197-215. See also Madison to Monroe, Feb. 18, 1818. *Monroe Papers, MSS.,* Vol. XVII.

[26] For the story of the expedition see Bancroft, *North Mexican States and Texas,* II, chap. ii; Yoakum, *History of Texas,* I, chaps. xii and xiii; McCaleb, "The First Period of the Gutierrez-Magee Expedition," *Texas Historical Association Quarterly,* IV, 218-229.

zens of Louisiana against giving any aid to the revolutionists, the expedition was widely advertised in the southwestern press, and Americans in large numbers flocked to join it.[27] The more conservative people of the western country were alarmed at the extent to which the expedition drew off laboring men, mechanics, and militiamen from Louisiana and Mississippi territory.[28] Accounts of the character of the force varied. To one writer they were "a motley collection of individuals

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[27] The Natchez *Gazette* (copied in Nashville *Clarion,* Sept. 8, 1812) related that American volunteers were repairing daily to the Spanish dominions to assist the revolutionists, and named Nacogdoches as the "place of rendezvous for the Spanish patriots & American volunteers." A letter from Natchitoches copied in the Nashville *Whig* (Sept. 23, 1812) called upon the writer's friends to "send all the arms you can purchase and advise all good people who wish well to the cause to come and join." Another letter from Natchitoches, dated Sept. 5, 1812, stated that the expedition consisted of five hundred men, "principally late citizens of the United States;" that Governor Claiborne's proclamation "has not the smallest effect. The people laugh at it while parties still pass through here avowing their object without any secrecy." (Nashville *Clarion,* Nov. 3, 1812.)

[28] "On my arrival at this place from the legislature," wrote a resident of Rapides, La., "I was very much surprised to find the country in the situation it then was; all the laboring men and mechanics had left it; a number of the drafted militia from the Mississippi territory were and are daily going to join Col. Magee and Don Bernardo." (*National Intelligencer,* Nov. 26, 1812.) William Gavrard of Opelousas, La., wrote Madison, Oct. 27, 1812, of "the very extraordinary movements of the People from this State and the adjoining Territory, in the invasion of the Spanish Province of Texas," and expressed concern that "the absence of such numbers to the Spanish Country leaves their own greatly exposed." (*Madison Papers, MSS.,* Vol. 47.)

. . . a people only fit for some desperate enterprize." Others reported that "the army observes the strictest subordination," that "the American volunteers have been governed by the strictest rules and regulations of war, and have not violated the property of any individual, but of those who were known to be the avowed enemies of republican liberty."[29]

William Gavrard, in a letter of October 27 to Madison, complained that the Americans engaged in the expedition boasted of the approbation of the government in their enterprise,[30] and the Federalist papers charged that the government "tacitly and implicitly sanctions the private acts of individuals, against the express injunctions of the law of the land."[31] There seems no basis for assuming, at this stage, any complicity on the part of the government, which no doubt trusted to Governor Claiborne to enforce the law. The governor of Tennessee had been warned to prevent the assembling of any such expedition in his state. The *National Intelligencer* (Oct. 6, 1812) referred to the "illegal and unauthorized expedition against Mexico." And yet the government was so far from making plain its exact position that a year later Claiborne could complain: "I have never understood how far the Executive Govern-

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[29] Philadelphia *Aurora,* Sept. 18, 1812. Nashville *Whig,* Sept. 23, 1812. Nashville *Clarion,* Nov. 3, 1812.

[30] See note 28 above.

[31] Georgetown *Federal Republican,* copied in Norfolk *Publick Ledger,* Oct. 5, 1812.

ment of the U. States felt an Interest in the Revolutionary Movement in Texas."[32]

The expedition for a while achieved brilliant success. Magee himself died during the winter, but his place was filled by Samuel Kemper and later by a Connecticut Yankee named Perry. In March, 1813, San Antonio was taken. The secret execution, by order of Gutierrez, of the Texan governor, Salcedo, and a dozen members of his staff, caused a defection among the Americans, and many of them returned home. Among these was Samuel Kemper, and it has generally been stated that he therewith abandoned the cause.[33] But contemporary newspaper accounts spoke of him as having returned home on furlough and later recorded that he had once more joined the army and was among those who escaped after the battle of the Medina.[34] At any rate his return to St. Francisville was followed by a new outburst of propaganda in favor of the revolutionists.[35] These appeals, and the continued successes

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[32] Claiborne to Madison, Oct. 23, 1813. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 50. See also Cox, *op. cit.* in note 25 above.

[33] Cf. Bancroft and Yoakum, *loc. cit.*

[34] Nashville *Whig* (June 9, 1813). New Hampshire *Patriot*, Aug. 10, 1813. Niles' *Register*, V, 104 (Oct. 9, 1813).

[35] The Nashville *Whig* (June 9, 1813) copied from the *Time-Piece* what apparently was an editorial, pointing out that "an immense field of fortune, honor, & renown, is now opened to those enterprising men of all ages, throughout the United States, who are disposed to come forward and lend their personal exertions in the aid of so glorious a cause." To attract those who objected to starting in the ranks, the following interesting announcement was published:

"Gentlemen who calculate to join the patriot Mexican army

of the revolutionary army, resulted in a considerable increase in the American contingent, until in August they amounted to 850 men.[36] Toledo had now displaced Gutierrez as the leader. The prospect seemed bright for the conquest of all Texas, if not all Mexico. Then, on August 18, the army fell into a cleverly laid ambuscade on the Medina river and was cut to pieces. Of the 850 Americans engaged, it is related that only ninety-three escaped to Natchitoches.[37]

Among those who escaped to the United States after the battle of the Medina was Toledo—now known as General Toledo. He still cherished the hope of accomplishing the liberation of Mexico, or at least Texas, but, as he wrote in May, 1814, he was disposed to remain a spectator until he saw whether the United States would take part in the liberation of the New World.[38] Meanwhile he found the cause falling into what he considered unworthy hands. Among his confidants was

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as officers, should furnish themselves with a good sabre, hoster-pistols [sic] and pocket-pistols, in order, if there should be a supernumerary number of officers, that they may be organized as corps of officers, to do duty on horseback—The most pleasant, honorable, and improving service in the whole range of military duty."

"Scientific gentlemen, also, in every branch and department of literature," were invited to come forward and lend their abilities "in ameliorating the condition of an oppressed and subjugated people." Finally, it was promised that every arrangement would be made at Nacogdoches to facilitate the passage of Americans to join the patriot army.

[36] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, II, 27.

[37] Ibid., II, 30.

[38] Toledo to William Shaler, May 30, 1814. *Papers Relating to Louisiana and Southern Boundary.* (State Dept. MSS.)

Samuel Kemper. In November, 1813, Kemper sent him from St. Francisville a copy of a letter written to Kemper by Humbert, a Frenchman residing in New Orleans. Humbert asked Kemper's co-operation in a new attempt at Texan independence. He claimed to have a force of fifteen hundred French in New Orleans, organized and ready for the expedition, while in addition, he said, "3,000 hommes de votre nation sont en route et amené par le docteur Robinson." Kemper stated to Toledo that he had disclaimed all connection with Humbert "as a European," and had sent his reply for publication to the Natchez *Gazette*.[39]

The Doctor Robinson mentioned by Humbert was John Hamilton Robinson, recently an employee of the State Department. A member of Pike's expedition into Mexico, he had been selected upon Pike's recommendation for a special mission to that country in the summer of 1812. He was instructed to do everything possible to establish cordial relations between Mexico and the United States, to assure the Spanish officials in Mexico that any appearance of aggression in the relations of the United States to the Floridas arose from the special circumstances of the war with Great Britain and was no cause for alarm to Mexico, and to do what he could toward establishing advantageous commercial relations.[40]

Robinson returned to the United States in the spring

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[39] Kemper to Toledo, Nov. 26, 1813. Ibid.
[40] Monroe to Robinson, July 1, 1812. Ibid.

of 1813. Apparently the official results of his mission amounted to nothing, but he had formed private designs. Our next news of him is from a printed circular letter over his signature, addressed to certain persons in St. Louis and dated at Philadelphia, September 16, 1813. This letter calls attention to the opportunities presented by the situation in Mexico, the danger of British intervention, the richness of the country, and the willingness of the Mexicans to receive Americans as brothers, and invites Robinson's friends to join him in earning "the plaudits of an admiring and grateful world, hailing that immortal Band and the entrance of the Mexican Republic, into the sublime rank of civilized nations." Those interested were to "Rendezvous, at Nacogdoches 25th Nov. 1813."[41]

The date set for the rendezvous was premature. In January, 1814, Robinson was at Natchez, where he succeeded in forming a "Junta" of "the friends of Mexican Emancipation." This body, on January 18, passed a series of resolutions declaring it expedient to take possession of the district of Texas and to garrison such military posts as circumstances permitted, entrusting Robinson with the powers of civil and military government, and authorizing him to make all needful arrangements for an expedition "into the internal provinces of Mexico."[42]

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Copy enclosed in Robinson to Col. John Smith, Apr. 12, 1814. Ibid.

Meanwhile, in November, Governor Claiborne had written to inform the President of the plans of Toledo and Humbert, who he suspected were acting together, and expressing his curiosity as to whether their plans had the backing of the government. If this were the case, he said, he would take pleasure in giving assistance; otherwise he should feel called upon to use the means in his power to suppress the project.[43] Information of Robinson's schemes had also reached Washington. In a letter of February 14, Monroe warned Robinson that his measures were contrary to law and were the more reprehensible inasmuch as his recent employment under the government might create the impression that his new designs had government support. He warned him further that if he did not immediately desist from his illegal measures, the most decisive steps would be taken to enforce the law against him.[44] On the same day Monroe warned the governors of Louisiana and Mississippi territory that Robinson's designs were wholly unlawful and repugnant to the wishes of the government, and called upon them to take the proper measures to prevent any such plans from being executed.[45] Three days later Monroe wrote Claiborne that there was reason to think that Humbert and Toledo were working in concert with Robinson, and directed

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[43] Claiborne to Madison, Nov. 29, 1813. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 50.

[44] *Domestic Letters*, XVI, 230. (State Dept. MSS.)

[45] Ibid., *loc. cit.*

him to be equally vigilant in suppressing the endeavors of all three.[46]

Monroe was deceived in one point—his belief that the three plotters were acting in harmony. Precisely what were the relations among the three it is not easy to say. It is certain, however, that Toledo would have nothing to do with Humbert; and in March, 1814, the friends of Toledo and Robinson had to intervene to settle a quarrel which had arisen "in consequence of certain suspicions which were expressed by Gen. Toledo in a letter to Col. Samuel Kemper of his Dr. Robinsons being connected with a French party carrying on certain enterprises."[47]

Toledo at the time declared himself satisfied that his former suspicions were erroneous, but his distrust of Robinson continued. Robinson's associates—the "junta"—at Natchitoches, Toledo considered "very low people," who cared for nothing but plunder and had already apportioned among themselves the best offices in the government they intended to set up. Even worse things were to be feared from the French party under Humbert, who intended to make use of the pirates of Barataria under the celebrated Lafitte in a combined military and naval expedition against Mexico. Worst of all, Toledo wrote in May, Robinson's party were now attempting to join forces with Humbert. In order, he said, to forestall Robinson and Humbert and

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[46] Ibid., XVI, 231.
[47] *Papers Relating to La. and Sou. Boundary.*

deprive them of Mexican support, Toledo determined to lead an expedition of his own. He enlisted a Colonel John Smith, who was sent with a small force across the Sabine "with a view of preventing the others from doing it." Toledo himself found it necessary to dodge a warrant for his arrest issued by Governor Claiborne. Upon reaching Smith's camp on the Sabine, he was surprised to find Robinson there, a prisoner. He considered Robinson's plans destroyed, those of Humbert still dangerous. He was determined to proceed with his expedition despite enormous difficulties.[48]

But Toledo's expedition apparently got no tarther than the camp west of the Sabine. He and other plotters continued to give concern to the authorities of the United States. Claiborne complained that the revolutionary movements could not be suppressed except by force, and that he had found the state militia wholly unsuited to that employment.[49] The revolutionists continued their fruitless plotting throughout the period of the war. In September, 1815, the President issued a proclamation warning all citizens and residents of the United States to aid in suppressing the preparations against the Spanish dominions.[50] Finally, in the same

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[48] Toledo to Wm. Shaler, Headquarters west of the Sabine, May 30, 1814. Ibid. Accompanying the letter, which is in Spanish, is an English summary, from which the quotations above are taken.

[49] Claiborne to Madison, Sept. 22, 1814. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 53.

[50] Transmitted to the governors of Tenn., La., Miss., and Mo. territories, Sept. 9, 1815. *Domestic Letters,* XVI, 257.

year, Federal indictments were brought against Toledo, Robinson, and several others for attempting to violate the neutrality laws of the United States.[51]

By the summer of 1814 the revolutionists of East Florida had been repudiated once and for all by the United States; the revolutionists of Texas had been crushed by the Spanish and their continued conspiracies within the United States denounced from Washington. It was plain that the Creek country and Mobile were to be the South's only gains from the war. The same period marks the final disappearance of the hope of annexing any part of Canada.

We saw in an earlier chapter that the events of 1812 and the early months of 1813 had, even in the West, appreciably dimmed the hope of conquering Canada. Spring and summer brought a revival of spirits. Jackson, returning from his expedition to Natchez, wrote Armstrong in April that if the government had any orders to execute in the vicinity of Malden, he would be glad to carry them out at the head of his detachment, adding: "I have a few standards wearing the American Eagle that I would be happy to place upon the ramparts of Malden."[52] A letter from Georgetown, Kentucky, copied in the New York *Evening Post* of May 10, asserted: "The *western* people will never consent to any Treaty with England, *until Canada is taken,* and

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[51] *Am. State Papers,* (1st series), XI, 307.
[52] Apr. 8, 1813. Copy in *Papers of Samuel Southard, MSS.*

a sufficient reparation for past offenses at sea; this may protract the War, notwithstanding the alarming situation of the Southern States."[53] In June Daniel Webster wrote to a friend that while a part of the Democrats doubtless wished for peace, "the West is still fierce for war." In his opinion the administration regarded its downfall as certain without an early peace; yet if it should make peace, it would "have all the West up in arms against it."[54]

The picture of western sentiment presented by these letters was probably exaggerated. The *Reporter* of Lexington, Kentucky, a representative Democratic paper, spoke favorably of the proposed Russian mediation. While insisting that England must yield upon impressment and paper blockades, make reparation for past injuries, and give security against Indian depredations, it made no mention at this time of the surrender of Canada as an essential. It was desirable, said this paper, to retrieve the character of the American arms and punish the barbarities of the River Raisin; but, "if an honorable peace be really within our grasp, it ought not to be declined simply to attain that object."[55] Fourth of July banqueters might drink to the toast, "No treaty without the cession of Canada!"[56] and a representative from Vermont might boast that his state

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[53] For light on "the alarming situation of the Southern states," see Randolph to Quincy, Aug. 30, 1813. Bruce, *John Randolph of Roanoke*, I, 397-398.

[54] Van Tyne, *Letters of Daniel Webster*, p. 46.

[55] The *Reporter*, May 1, June 26, 1813.

[56] Chillicothe *Fredonian*, July 13, 1813.

had contributed men and money "with a proud and confident view to aid in the attack and conquest of Canada, which he was not ashamed to say was one of the ultimate objects of his countrymen";[57] but when Dearborn resigned only to give place to Wilkinson—a man worse than himself—and the summer dragged along with no display of energy save Perry's unostentatious building operations at Presque-isle, western opinion could not well be optimistic.

It was during this time, strangely enough, that the Secretary of State made his first feeble suggestion that Great Britain might be persuaded to cede Canada. Referring to the Russian mediation, Jefferson wrote Monroe what he thought might be hoped for as a result of the negotiations.

"Could we acquire that country [Canada]," wrote Jefferson, "we might perhaps insist successfully at St. Petersburg on retaining all westward of the meridian of Lake Huron, or of Ontario, or of Montreal, according to the pulse of the place, as an indemnification for the past and security for the future. To cut them off from the Indians even west of the Huron would be a great future security."[58]

June 23 Monroe sent further instructions to the peace commissioners. On the subject of Canada he spoke much in the tone of his previous notes. Curiously reversing Jefferson's earlier language, he based his in-

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[57] Bradley of Vermont, July 9, 1813. *Annals of Congress*, 13 Cong., I, 413.

[58] *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, VI, 131. June 18, 1813.

structions on "a presumption that the British Government will make the restitution of Canada a *sine qua non* in any treaty you may make," although it may have "no equivalent restitution to make to the United States. Should this be the case," added Monroe, "it is not intended to carry on the war, rather than yield to that unequal condition, but it may justly be expected, that Great Britain will be the more liberal on other points to be adjusted." So far we have virtually the language of the earlier notes. But this time Monroe added, possibly at the above suggestion from Jefferson, that "it may be worth while to bring to view the advantages to both countries which is [sic] promised, by a transfer of the Upper parts and even the whole of Canada to the United States. . . . The possession of it by England must hereafter prove a fruitful source of controversy which its transfer to the United States would remove."[59] This was the strongest bid ever made by Monroe for the annexation of Canada. His weak attitude gives some plausibility to the declaration of a Federalist congressman: "Sir, this Administration never intended to conquer Canada."[60]

After a summer of futility the country was electrified in September by the news of Perry's victory on Lake Erie, and shortly thereafter of the defeat of the British and Indians at the Thames, the death of Tecumseh, and the recovery of Detroit and the Northwest. The

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[59] *Writings of James Monroe*, V, 367.
[60] Cyrus King of Mass. *Annals of Cong.*, 13 Cong., I, 1073.

hope of taking Canada at once revived. John Randolph clearly foresaw the psychological result of Perry's victory. August 30 he had written to his newly found Federalist friend, Quincy, congratulating him on the success of the allied arms in the Spanish peninsula. "This event," he wrote, ". . . may dispose our wretched ministry to a serious endeavor at peace." But the hopes aroused in Randolph by the successes of British armies in Spain were dispelled by the victory of the American navy on Lake Erie. "We have today," he wrote September 26, to Francis Scott Key, "the account of Perry's success on Lake Erie which will add another year to the life of the war."[61]

From all over the Northwest arose the demand that Canada—virtually conquered, it was thought, by Perry and Harrison—should never be relinquished. "The loyal Canadians," said the Lexington *Reporter* (Oct. 2, 1813), "may lay in an additional stock of wood, for our troops mean to spend the winter with them." The *Kentucky Gazette,* after commenting on the splendid results of the victories, added some significant paragraphs.

"But if the western people," said the editor of the

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[61] Bruce, *John Randolph of Roanoke,* I, 397, 400. Randolph cherished an intense dislike of the Westerners—"Clay, Grundy, & Co."—and everything they stood for. "We are the first people," he wrote Quincy in another letter, "that ever acquired provinces...not for us to govern but that they might *govern us,*—that we might be ruled to our ruin by people bound to us by no common tie of interest or sentiment." Ibid., I, 402.

Gazette (Nov. 1, 1813), "are doomed to see their country *again* the theatre of savage wars and massacres by the *surrender of Canada* on a treaty of peace—they will rue the day that ever they led their thousands to the slaughter house of Indian & British butchery. . . . Is it possible that our government intend to restore Canada to the enemy? For its honor and character we hope not."

The return of Governor Shelby and Colonel R. M. Johnson to Kentucky after the victory was celebrated by dinners in their honor at Lexington, and the diners drank to such toasts as: "Canada, once conquered, no consideration should induce us to surrender it to the enemy!" and "Upper Canada, purchased with the blood of the West, may it never be sacrificed to the prejudices of the East." Johnson himself, fresh from a distinguished part in the battle of the Thames, offered the toast: "The Canadas—such part as may be conquered by our arms, may it never be ceded away, but be incorporated with and be made a part of the American Union."[62]

The *Gazette* (Jan. 17, 1814) observed that a member of the Kentucky legislature had introduced "resolutions expressive of the sense of that body, as to *the conquest and retention of the Canadas;* without the effectuation of which a frontier of two thousand miles will have suffered in vain," and added: "We hope that the intelligent and patriotic sentiment which inspired

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[62] Lexington *Reporter*, Nov. 13, 1813; Jan. 8, 1814.

Mr. Ewing on this occasion, will animate and influence every member of the Legislature." Duncan McArthur of Ohio wrote to Thomas Worthington in quite similar vein, trusting "that any advantage which has been gained, will never be relinquished."[63] So strong was the flare-up of annexationist sentiment that Rufus King, Federalist senator from New York, wrote from Washington in December: "Canada and the Floridas are becoming the principal objects of the war—no peace is to be made, say the people of the western waters, unless Canada and the Floridas, especially Canada, be added to the Union."[64]

This spirit was not confined to the remoter West. William Crawford, a representative from Pennsylvania, wrote Madison that communication from members of the Pennsylvania legislature and information variously derived elsewhere compelled him to believe that any peace with Great Britain which failed to provide for the cession of Upper Canada and Lower Canada west of the Sorrel, would be "very ungraciously received by the friends of the administration in the interior & western parts of our country. Even on our seaboard—many of our citizens will not be satisfied with a peace which does not reach this object."[65] Ex-governor Plumer of New Hampshire, at about the same time,

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[63] McArthur to Worthington, Oct. 6, Dec. 18, 1813. *Papers of Thomas Worthington, MSS.*

[64] *Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, V, 356.

[65] Crawford to Madison, Feb. 12, 1814. *Madison Papers, MSS.*, Vol. 51.

wrote to John Quincy Adams that he still had hope that the war would result in the acquisition of Canada by the United States, without which he did not think a permanent peace could be preserved with the northern Indians; and as late as March, 1814, he declared that he should "prefer a continuance of the war till we can obtain the Canadas."[66]

Similar expressions were common in Congress during the winter,[67] but there were many discordant notes. New England Federalists denounced the whole plan of conquest. Ward of Massachusetts asserted that it had been the plan of the administration and its friends "that from the conquest of Canada they would return and put down Federal opposition" by force of arms.[68] Gaston, a North Carolina Federalist, combined with his party opposition to the war a sectional distrust which was very probably shared by some southern Republicans who were less free than he to speak their minds. If Canada should be conquered, he thought, there would be "a powerful party at the North and West that will not consent to part with it—with whom it is an object. But how shall it be kept? As a conquered province? . . . Such a conquest is never finished; when nominally effected, it is to be begun. But

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[66] Plumer to Adams, Jan. 24, 1814. *Wm. Plumer Letters, MSS.*, III, 355. Plumer to Gerry, Mar. 5, 1814. Wm. Plumer, Jr., *Life of William Plumer*, p. 418.

[67] See speeches by Wilson and Ingersoll of Pa., Calhoun, and Macon. Annals of Congress, 13 Cong., I, 951, 996, 1004, 1039-1040; II, 1778-1780.

[68] Ibid. II, 1826. See also speech of Webster, Ibid., I, 939.

we will incorporate it into the Union—ay, this would be indeed a pleasant result! Let my Southern friends —let gentlemen who represent slaveholding States attend to this. How would this project take at home? What would their constituents give to have half a dozen new States made out of the Canadas?"[69]

Gaston thus sought to revive the sectional bugaboo which Randolph had painted in such horrid colors two years before. Southern opposition to the prospect of a group of new northern states had been quieted in 1812, as we have seen, by an assurance that the South should get the Floridas as compensation. But the Florida dream had faded, and it need excite no wonder now if Southerners were not over-cordial to the idea of incorporating Canada. We have seen that Monroe had at no time shown any enthusiasm for taking Canada. Wilson Cary Nicholas of Virginia wrote, apparently at about this time, that "it seems to be generally understood, if we had made this conquest [Canada] we would give it up and that we would make peace upon the single condition of the exemption of our seamen from impressment."[70] Nicholas himself thought that if Canada were conquered it should be retained, and doubtless there were many Southerners who agreed with him; but he wrote of the opposite view as that "generally understood" in his section. There are additional signs

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[69] Ibid. II, 1569.

[70] Undated draft of letter to the Sec. of War, evidently written after the failure of the eastern campaigns of 1813. *Papers of Wilson Cary Nicholas, MSS.,* Portfolio III.

that there was a southern group hostile to the retention of Canada. Mr. Cheves, for example, explained in the House that it need not be assumed that Canada would be retained, even if conquered; that it could be used as a basis of negotiation on other points.[71] Cheves's speech came six days after Gaston's. While ostensibly in answer to Federalist arguments that it was useless to expect to take Canada from Great Britain, it is reasonable to suppose that he was at the same time seeking to allay the sectional fears of some of his southern friends.

In the following April occurred a curious conversation between Secretary Armstrong and Rufus King, which may throw a ray of light on this question.

"How are you going on with the recruiting service?" asked King; "and will you invade Canada this year?"

"If we are [sic] in earnest," Armstrong replied, "the recruiting would proceed well—but new views are entertained—pains are taken to impress upon the Western States, that Canada is a fertile and desirable country,—if acquired by the U. S. that the surplus population of the East will go to Canada, and not as now to the Western States—that the consequence will be to check their population and prosperity—this will endure until Canada be filled—hence it will be expedient to defer the acquisition of Canada until the Western States are fully populated and their vacant lands taken up and settled."[72]

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[71] *Annals of Congress*, 13 Cong., II, 1634.
[72] *Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, V, 390.

Who were the people who were thus, according to Armstrong, trying to alienate the western states from the support of the war? Possibly the Federalists; and yet it seems unlikely that, on this supposition, Armstrong would have spoken in this way to the Federalist, King, or that King would have relished the revelation, as he evidently did. Almost certainly Armstrong referred to a southern group led by Monroe. Between Armstrong and Monroe there was at this time a "deadly feud."[73] Two years after this, Armstrong, in a letter to Joseph Desha of Kentucky, charged that, while Armstrong was Secretary of War, Monroe had instructed the generals on the northern front—Wilkinson, Hampton, and Izard (all southern men)—"*not to do too much* and that *this was secretly* the wish of the Presid[en]t."[74] The two forms of sabotage were doubtless associated in Armstrong's mind, and he referred to Monroe in the conversation as in the letter. Indeed, it appears that King so understood him, for he closed the conversation by assuring Armstrong that the Virginia Dynasty would never allow him or any other eastern man to reap such an honor as the conquest of Canada.

How much truth there was in Armstrong's allegations is another question. It would be absurd to accept his charges against Monroe at face value. Yet, bitter as the hatred was between the two men, it seems

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[73] Bruce, *John Randolph of Roanoke,* I, 397.

[74] Armstrong to Desha, Mar. 6, 1816. *Joseph Desha Letters, MSS.*

improbable that Armstrong would have made these assertions and insinuations without at least some slight foundation in truth. They seem at least to point to a southern group opposed to the annexation of Canada, with which group it is not unreasonable to suppose Monroe may have been connected.

Southerners who feared an upsetting of the balance of power need not have worried had they carefully studied the situation in the winter of 1813-14. The campaigns of Wilkinson and Hampton in the Northeast had been complete failures with no redeeming feature. In the Northwest, the results of the victories of Perry and Harrison had fallen far short of the expectations. By December, 1813, the United States was already taking a defensive attitude on that part of the front. Armstrong wrote Harrison that he was convinced the enemy would attempt to re-establish himself in the West, using the land route along the Thames, and directed him to convert the Thames settlements into a desert—an order which the more humane Madison caused to be modified a few days later.[75] So great was the alarm felt for the safety of the ships during the winter, when they might be attacked over the ice, that Harrison actually suggested burning the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* at Put-in-Bay to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy. Armstrong replied that this step should be taken only as a last resort, and

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[75] Armstrong to Harrison, Dec. 29, 1813, Jan. 1, 1814. *Military Book*, VII, 86, 92. (War Dept. MSS.)

a little later suggested removing the guns from the ships to make them less of an object for British enterprise.[76] Under protection of troops and a blockhouse at Put-in-Bay, and other defenses at Erie, the fleet passed the winter in safety, and the Americans continued to control Lake Erie, but the events of the following summer were disappointing. At different times and places the British captured or destroyed eight of the smaller American vessels. An American expedition sent to take the post at Mackinac was repulsed, and in September the two schooners which had been left to control Lake Huron were adroitly captured by the British, who thereby had entire control of Lake Huron and the St. Mary's river.[77]

To the westward, in the Wisconsin country, British fur-traders were in control throughout most of the war. "In the spring of 1814 the Americans took Prairie du Chien. . . . The British traders, voyageurs, and Indians dislodged the Americans, and at the close of the war England was practically in possession of the Indian country of the Northwest."[78]

Despite the optimism current in the fall of 1813 and the early winter, the Northwest was growing discouraged and tired of the war. Thomas Worthington, who

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[76] Armstrong to Harrison, Jan. 8, Feb. 5, 1814. Ibid., VII, 96, 121.

[77] *Dobbins Papers,* pp. 371-374. Slocum, *The Ohio Country between the Years 1783 and 1815,* pp. 298-300.

[78] Turner, *The Character and Influence of the Indian Trade in Wisconsin, J. H. U. Studies,* Ninth Series (1891), pp. 589-590.

had voted against the declaration of war, was told that his explanation of his views on that subject was "much to the satisfaction of the people of this country—as time has proven beyont [sic] a doubt that the declaration of war at the time it was made was premature, and badly timed for the interest of the nation."[79] Duncan McArthur, who in the autumn had been insistent upon the retention of western Canada, wrote in April, 1814, after a journey across the Northwest, that those who had at first been friendly to the war were becoming discouraged, fearing that the government must make peace without accomplishing any of the ends for which the war had been begun. "I cannot see," he wrote, "that the war, at present, promises much from conquest, but still I hope, we will be able to maintain our Territory and defend our rights."[80]

Shortly after the date of these letters came the news of the capitulation of Bonaparte and the realization that England could now devote her undivided energies to the war in America. In the summer Wellington's veterans began to arrive in Canada and the Chesapeake; and when at last American armies were beginning to be competently officered and to feel the spirit of organized warfare, their ability was more than neutralized by the superior numbers of the British. Had the American troops in 1812 fought as they fought at Lundy's Lane, it is possible that Madison and Monroe

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[79] John Pollock to Worthington, Clermont Co., Ohio, Mar. 12, 1814. *Papers of Thomas Worthington, MSS.*

[80] McArthur to Worthington, Apr. 15, 1814. Ibid.

might have been forced to settle the difficult question whether or not Canada was to be retained. As it was, Madison could only write to Jefferson in October: "The most that can fairly be hoped for by us now is that the campaign may end where it is."[81]

Thanks to the stubborn fighting of Brown, the splendid victory of Macdonough on Lake Champlain, and the skilful diplomacy of its commissioners at Ghent, the United States secured peace without loss of territory—a much better peace than seemed possible in the summer of 1814. The results were far enough from those which had been anticipated when the war opened. Aside from the maritime grievances, upon which Great Britain made no formal concession, the nation had to forego all the territorial gains which had been promised. The administration, it is true, published a formal "Exposition of the Causes and Character of the War," prepared by A. J. Dallas, in which it denied that the acquisition of Canada had ever been a part of its program.[82] This may very well have been true of the administration, as we have seen from our analysis of Monroe's position, but it certainly was not true of the men who had urged the war. Frederick the Great had no clearer designs upon Silesia than the men of the Northwest and the South had upon Canada and Florida. They had failed—partly because sectional jealousy had formed an obstacle to energetic action, partly because

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[81] *Writings of James Madison* (Congress ed.), II, 591.

[82] *Annals of Congress,* 13 Cong., III, 1416 ff. *Writings of James Madison,* VIII, 332.

it had been necessary to leave the management of the war to men of different interests, aims, and temperaments. Could the Westerners have picked their own cabinet and their own generals, zeal might possibly have conquered despite inexperience.

The war over, the grievances against Great Britain disappeared, for the frontier as for the seaboard. On the south and southwest, the Spanish lands continued to furnish sources of irritation—and tempting prizes. Florida was acquired by diplomacy. But to the southwest, the course of events sketched by Jefferson in 1791 continued to unfold itself, and the United States sent forth emigrants not to lose them but to regain both them and their new possessions. Meanwhile the sectional rivalry of 1812 doubled and trebled in intensity; each section continued to view with jealousy any territorial gain by its rival; a new series of "compensations" was devised, and in 1844 Texas and Oregon were coupled upon the same principle as Florida and Canada in 1812. Add the note of "Manifest Destiny," which, though unknown by that name till the Texas days, was so often sounded in the debates of the Twelfth Congress, and we have in the War of 1812 an epitome of much of our history for the three succeeding decades.

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